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INTERNATIONAL LIMITED EDITION

LES MISÉRABLES

IN FIVE VOLUMES

VOL. IV.

THE IDYLL AND THE EPIC

BY VICTOR HUGO

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

BOSTON

ESTES AND LAURIAT

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LES MISÉRABLES.

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AND

THE RUE ST. DENIS EPIC.

VOL. IV.

THE RUE PLUMET IDYLL

AND

THE RUE ST. DENIS EPIC.

BOOK I.

SOME PAGES OF HISTORY.

CHAPTER I.

EXCELLENTLY CUT OUT.

THE two years immediately attached to the Revolution of July, 1831 and 1832, form one of the most peculiar and striking moments of history. These two years, amid those that precede and follow them, stand out like mountains. They possess true revolutionary grandeur. Precipices may be traced in them. The

social masses, the very foundations of civilization, the solid group of superimposed and adherent interests, the time-honoured profiles of the ancient Gallic formation, appear and disappear in them every moment, through the stormy clouds of systems, passions, and theories. These appearances and disappearances have been called resistance and movement. At intervals, truth, — that daylight of the human soul, — is seen shining there.

This remarkable epoch is so circumscribed, and is beginning to become so remote from us, that we can even now seize its principal outlines.

We will make the attempt.

The Restoration was one of those intermediate phases, difficult to define, in which we find fatigue, buzzing, murmurs, sleep, and tumult, and which, after all, are nought but the arrival of a great nation at a halting-place. These epochs are peculiar, and deceive the politician who would fain take advantage of them. At the outset the nation only demands repose; it thirsts for but one thing, — peace; it has but one ambition, — to be small; which is another phrase for being quiet. "Great events, great hazards, great adventures, great men, — thank God, we have had enough of these; we are over head and ears in them." We would give Cæsar for Prusias, and Napoleon for the Roi d'Yvetôt. "What a good little king was he!" We have been marching since daybreak; we have reached the evening of a long and rough journey; we made our first stage with Mirabeau, the second with Robespierre, and the third with Napoleon, and we are exhausted. Everybody insists on a bed.

Worn-out devotions, heroisms which have grown old, sated ambitions, and ready-made fortunes, seek, claim, implore, and solicit what? — a resting-place; and they have it. They take possession of peace, tranquillity, and

leisure; they are content. Still, at the same time, certain facts arise, demand recognition, and knock at the door in their turn. These facts proceed from revolution and war. They exist, they live, they have the right to install themselves in society, which they do; and in the majority of instances, facts are the quartermasters who merely prepare a billet for principles.

This then is what appears to political philosophers.

At the same time that weary men claim rest, accomplished facts demand guarantees; for guarantees are to facts what repose is to men. This is what England asked of the Stuarts after the Protector; and what France asked of the Bourbons after the empire. These guarantees are a necessity of the times, and they must be granted. Princes "concede" them; but, in reality, it is the force of things that gives them. This is a profound truth, and one worth knowing, which the Stuarts did not suspect in 1662, and of which the Bourbons did not even gain a glimpse in 1814.

The predestined family, which returned to France when Napoleon collapsed, had the fatal simplicity to believe that it gave, and that it could take back what it had once given; that the House of Bourbon possessed the right divine, and France possessed nothing; and that the political right conceded in the charter of Louis XVIII. was nothing but a branch of the divine right, detached by the House of Bourbon and graciously given to the people up to the day when the king should think proper to clutch it again. Still, from the displeasure which the gift caused it, the House of Bourbon should have felt that it did not emanate from it. It behaved in a grudging way to the nineteenth century, and frowned on every expansion of the nation. To employ a trivial, that is to say, a popular and true phrase, it was crabbed; and the people saw it.

It thought it was strong because the empire had been removed before it, like a stage scene; but it did not perceive that it had itself been produced in the same way, nor see that it was held in the same hand which had removed Napoleon.

It believed that it had roots because it was the past. It was mistaken; it formed a portion of the past, but the whole past was France. The roots of French society were not in the Bourbons, but in the nation. These obscure and vigorous roots did not constitute the right of one family, but the history of a people. They were everywhere, except upon the throne. The House of Bourbon was to France the illustrious and blood-stained nucleus of her history, but was no longer the principal element of her destiny nor the necessary basis of her political structure. She could do without the Bourbons; she had done without them for two-and-twenty years. There was a solution of continuity; they did not suspect it. And how should they suspect it, when they imagined that Louis XVII. reigned on the 9th Thermidor, and that Louis XVIII. was reigning on the day of Marengo? Never, since the origin of history, have princes been so blind in the presence of facts and that portion of divine authority which facts contain and promulgate. Never did that earthly claim which is called the right of kings, deny to such a pitch the right from on high.

It was a capital error which led this family to lay its hand once more on the guarantees "granted" in 1814,— on the "concessions" as it entitled them. It is a sad thing that what it called its concessions were our conquests; what it called our encroachments were our rights.

When the hour seemed to it to have come, the Restoration, supposing itself victorious over Bonaparte, and firmly rooted in the country, — that is to say, believing itself strong and deep, — suddenly made up its mind, and

risked its stake. One morning it rose in the face of France, and lifting its voice, contested the collective title and the individual title, the sovereignty of the nation and the liberty of the citizen. In other words, it denied to the nation that which made it a nation, and to the citizen that which made him a citizen.

This is the basis of those famous decrees which are called the Ordinances of July. The Restoration fell.

It fell justly. Still, let us add, it was not absolutely hostile to all forms of progress. Grand things were accomplished, while it stood aloof.

During the Restoration the nation had grown accustomed to calm discussion, in which the republic was deficient, and to grandeur in peace, which was not known under the empire. France, strong and free, was an encouraging sight to the other nations of Europe. Under Robespierre, the Revolution ruled ; under Bonaparte, cannon ; while in the reigns of Louis XVIII. and Charles X. it was intellect's turn to speak. The wind ceased, and the torch was re-lighted. The pure light of mind played around the serene summits. It was a magnificent, useful, and delightful spectacle. For fifteen years, those great principles, which are so old to the thinker, so new to the statesman, — equality before the law, liberty of conscience, freedom of the press and of speech, and the accessibility of all fitting men to office, — could be seen at work in a reign of peace, and publicly. Things went on thus till 1830. The Bourbons were an instrument of civilization which broke in the hands of Providence.

The fall of the Bourbons was full of grandeur; not on their side, but on that of the nation. They left the throne with gravity, but without authority. Their descent into night was not one of those solemn disappearances which lend a sombre emotion to history; it was neither the spectral calm of Charles I. nor the eagle cry of Napoleon.

They went away, that was all. They laid down the crown, and retained no aureole. Though they were dignified, they were not august; they lacked, in a certain measure, the majesty of their misfortune. Charles X., ordering a round table to be cut square during the voyage to Cherbourg, seemed more anxious about imperilled etiquette than about the crumbling monarchy. This pettiness saddened the devoted men who were personally attached to the Bourbons, and the serious men who honoured their race. The people behaved admirably, however; and the nation, attacked one morning by a sort of royalist insurrection, felt itself so strong that it displayed no anger. It defended itself, restrained itself, restored things to their places, — the government to law, the Bourbons to exile, — alas! and stopped there. It took the old king, Charles X., from under the daïs which had sheltered Louis XIV., and placed him gently on the ground. It touched the royal persons cautiously and sorrowfully. It was not one man, or a few men, but France, united France, France victorious and intoxicated by her victory, who appeared to remember, and put into practice before the eyes of the whole world, these serious remarks of Guillaume du Vair after the day of the Barricades: — "It is easy for those who are accustomed to obtain the favours of the great, and to leap like a bird from branch to branch, from a low to a flourishing fortune, to show themselves harsh against their prince in his adversity; but for my part, the fortune of my kings, principally of those who are afflicted, will ever be venerable to me."

The Bourbons bore away with them respect, but not regret. As we have said, their misfortune was greater than themselves, and they faded on the horizon.

The Revolution of July at once found friends and enemies throughout the world. The former rushed toward it enthusiastically and joyfully, while the latter turned

away, each according to his nature. The princes of Europe, the owls of this dawn, at the first closed their eyes, wounded and stunned, and only opened them again to menace. Their terror is easily understood, and their anger is pardonable. This strange revolution had scarcely produced a shock; it did not even pay conquered royalty the honour of treating it as an enemy, and of shedding its blood. In the sight of despotic governments, which always have an interest in leading liberty to calumniate itself, the Revolution of July erred in being terrible and remaining gentle. No attempt, moreover, was made or plotted against it. The most dissatisfied, the most irritated, the most timid, saluted it. Whatever our selfishness and our rancour may be, we feel a mysterious respect for events in which we are sensible of the co-operation of some power which labours high above mankind.

The Revolution of July is the triumph of right overthrowing fact. A thing full of splendour.

Right overthrowing fact; hence the brilliancy of the Revolution of 1830, and hence also its mildness. Right triumphant needs no violence.

Right is justice and truth.

It is the property of right to remain eternally beautiful and pure. Fact, even when apparently most necessary and most fully accepted by contemporaries, if it exist only as fact and contain too little of right, or none at all, is infallibly destined to become, in the course of time, misshapen, foul, perhaps even monstrous. If we would discover at a glance what a degree of ugliness fact can attain, when viewed at the distance of centuries, let us look at Machiavelli. He is not an evil genius, a demon, or a cowardly and servile writer; he is nothing but the fact. And he is not merely the Italian fact; he is the European fact,—the fact of the sixteenth century. He appears hideous, and so he is, in the presence of the moral idea of the nineteenth century.

This struggle between right and fact has been going on ever since the origin of societies. It is the task of wise men to terminate the duel, to amalgamate the pure idea with human reality, and to make right penetrate pacifically into fact, and fact into right.

CHAPTER II.

BADLY STITCHED.

BUT the task of wise men is one thing; the task of clever men is another. The Revolution of 1830 quickly stopped.

So soon as a revolution makes the shore, clever men make haste to run her aground.

Clever men in our century have decreed themselves the title of "statesmen;" so that the word "statesman" has eventually become a bit of slang. For it must not be forgotten that where there is nothing but cleverness, pettiness necessarily exists. To say "the clever" is much like saying "the mediocre."

In the same way the word "statesman" is sometimes equivalent to "traitor."

If, then, we are to believe clever men, revolutions like that of July are severed arteries; a prompt ligature is required. Right, if too loudly proclaimed, gives way. So, too, right once substantiated, the State must be strengthened. When liberty is assured, attention must be turned to power.

At this point wise men do not yet differ from clever men, but begin to distrust them. Power! very good; but, in the first place, what is power; and, in the second, whence does it come? The clever men do not seem to hear the muttered objection, and continue their manœuvres. According to those politicians, who are ingenious at placing a mask of necessity upon profitable fictions, the first

requirement of a people after a revolution, if that people form part of a monarchical continent, is to obtain a dynasty. In this way, they say, peace is secured after the revolution, — that is to say, the necessary time to repair the house and dress the wounds. A dynasty hides the scaffolding and covers the ambulance.

Now, it is not always easy to obtain a dynasty.

Strictly speaking, the first man of genius or the first adventurer met with will do to make a king. You have, in the first case, Bonaparte; and in the second, Iturbide.

But the first family that comes to hand does not suffice to form a dynasty. A certain amount of antiquity is necessarily required in a race, and the wrinkles of centuries cannot be improvised.

If we place ourselves at the standpoint of "statesmen" (with all due reserves, of course), after a revolution, what are the qualities of the king who results from it? He may be, and it is useful that he should be, a revolutionary, — that is to say, a personal participant in that revolution; that he should have had a hand in it, have become either compromised or renowned in it, have wielded the axe or drawn the sword.

What are the qualities of a dynasty? It should be national, — that is to say, remotely revolutionary; not through acts done, but through ideas accepted. It should be composed of the past and be historic, and of the future and be sympathetic.

All this explains why the first revolutions were satisfied with finding a man, — Napoleon or Cromwell; and why the second were determined to find a family, like the House of Brunswick or the House of Orléans. Royal houses resemble those Indian fig-trees, each branch of which, bending down, takes root in the ground, and becomes a fig-tree. Each branch may become a dynasty, on the sole condition that it bends down to the people.

Such is the theory of clever men.

This, then, is the great art: To give success somewhat the sound of a catastrophe, so that those who profit by it may also tremble at it; to season every step that is taken, with fear; to increase the curve of the transition until progress is checked; to bedim the dawn; to denounce and retrench the roughness of enthusiasm; to cut angles and nails; to swathe triumph in wadding; to wrap up right; roll the giant-people in flannel and put it to bed at full speed; to place that excess of health under medical treatment; to regard Hercules as a convalescent; to dilute the event with expediency, and offer that weak nectar to minds thirsting for the ideal; to take precautions against extreme success, and provide the revolution with a sunshade.

1830 practised this theory, which had already been applied to England by 1688.

1830 is a revolution arrested mid-way. A moiety of progress is almost right. Now, logic ignores this *almost*, just as the sun ignores a rushlight.

Who checks revolutions half-way? The middle class.

Why?

Because the middle class represents satisfied self-interest. Yesterday it was appetite, to-day it is fulness, and to-morrow it will be satiety.

The phenomenon of 1814, after Napoleon, was reproduced in 1830 after Charles X.

Attempts have been made, though wrongly, to convert the middle classes (the tradesmen) into a class, but it is merely the contented portion of the population. The middle-class man, the tradesman, is a man who has at last time to sit down. A chair is not a caste.

But through a desire to sit down too soon, the progress of the human race may be arrested. This has frequently been the fault of the middle classes.

People are not a class because they commit an error. Selfishness is not one of the divisions of the social order.

Moreover, we must be just even to selfishness. The condition to which that portion of the nation called the middle classes aspired after the shock of 1830 was not the inactivity which is complicated with indifference and sloth, and which contains a little shame; nor was it the sleep which presupposes a momentary oblivion accessible to dreams. It was a halt.

This word contains a peculiar double and almost contradictory meaning. It implies troops on the march, — that is to say, movement; and a stopping place, — that is to say, rest.

A halt is the restoration of strength. It is repose armed and alert; it is the accomplished fact posting its sentries and standing on guard.

A halt presupposes yesterday's combat and to-morrow's combat.

It is the interlude between 1830 and 1848.

What we here call "combat" may also be called "progress."

Hence the middle classes, as well as the statesmen, required a man who expressed the idea of a halt, — an "Although-Because," a composite individuality, signifying revolution and signifying stability; in other words, strengthening the present by the evident compatibility of the past with the future. This man was found ready to their hand. His name was Louis Philippe d'Orléans. The 221 made Louis Philippe king. Lafayette undertook the coronation. He called it "the best of republics." The Town Hall of Paris was substituted for the Cathedral of Rheims.

This substitution of a half throne for a complete throne was "the work of 1830."

When the clever men had completed their task, the immense defect of their solution became apparent. All that had been done was beyond the pale of absolute right. Absolute right shouted, "I protest!" and then — formidable fact — again fell back into its darkness.

CHAPTER III.

LOUIS PHILIPPE.

REVOLUTIONS have a terrible arm and a lucky hand; they hit hard and choose well. Even when incomplete, even when debased, abused, and reduced to the state of a junior revolution, like that of 1830, they nearly always retain sufficient providential light to avoid falling amiss. Their eclipse is never an abdication.

Still, we must not boast too loudly; revolutions themselves may be mistaken, and grave errors have been witnessed ere now.

Let us return to 1830, which was fortunate in its deviation. In the establishment which was called order after revolution had been cut short, the king was worth more than royalty. Louis Philippe was a rare man.

Son of a father to whom history will certainly grant extenuating circumstances, but as worthy of esteem as his father was of blame; possessing all the private virtues and some of the public virtues; careful of his health, his fortune, his person, and his business affairs; knowing the value of a minute, but not always the value of a year; sober, serious, peaceful, and patient; a good man and a good prince; sleeping with his wife, and having in his palace lackeys whose business it was to show the conjugal couch to citizens, — an ostentation of the lawful sleeping apartment which had grown useful after the old illegitimate displays of the elder branch; acquainted with all the languages of Europe, and, what is rarer still, with

all the languages of all interests, and speaking them; an admirable representative of the "middle class," but surpassing it, and in every way greater; possessing the excellent sense, while appreciating the blood from which he sprang, to count especially upon intrinsic merits, and very particular on this same question of his race, declaring himself an Orléans and not a Bourbon; a thorough first prince of the blood, so long as he was only a "serene highness," but a plain man of the people from the day he became a king; diffuse in public, and concise in private; branded as a miser, but not proved to be one; in reality one of those economists who are easily prodigal to satisfy their caprice or their duty; well read, and caring but little for literature; a gentleman, but not a cavalier; simple, calm, and strong; adored by his family and his household; fascinating in conversation, a statesman who had no illusions, cold at heart, swayed by immediate interests, governing from hand to mouth; incapable of rancour and of gratitude; pitilessly employing superiorities upon mediocrities; clever at confounding by parliamentary majorities those mysterious unanimities which growl hoarsely beneath thrones; open-hearted, — sometimes imprudent in his open-heartedness, but displaying marvellous skill in this imprudence; fertile in expedients, faces, and masks; making France fear Europe, and Europe France; undeniably loving his country, but preferring his family; valuing dominion more than authority, and authority more than dignity; a temperament which has this fatal feature, that by turning everything to success, it admits of craft, and does not absolutely repudiate baseness, but which at the same time has this advantage, that it preserves politics from violent shocks, the State from fractures, and society from catastrophes; minute, correct, vigilant, attentive, sagacious, and indefatigable; contradicting himself at times, and giving himself the lie; bold against Austria

at Ancona, obstinate against England in Spain, bombarding Antwerp and paying Pritchard; singing the "Marseillaise" with conviction; inaccessible to despondency, to fatigue, to a taste for the beautiful and ideal, to rash generosity, to Utopias, chimeras, anger, vanity, and fear; possessing every form of personal bravery; a general at Valmy, a private at Jemmappes; eight times attacked by regicides, and constantly smiling; brave as a grenadier, and courageous as a thinker; only anxious about the chances of a European convulsion, and unfitted for great political adventures; ever ready to risk his life, but never his work; making his will seem his influence, for the sake of being obeyed rather as an intellect than as a king; gifted with observation and not with divination; paying but slight attention to minds, but with a thorough knowledge of men, — that is to say, requiring to see ere he could judge; endowed with prompt and penetrating good sense, practical wisdom, a fluent tongue, a prodigious memory; incessantly drawing on that memory, — his sole similitude with Cæsar, Alexander, and Napoleon; knowing facts, details, dates, and proper names, but ignorant of the various passions, geniuses, and tendencies of the crowd, the internal aspirations, the obscure and hidden revolts of souls, — in one word, of all that may be called the invisible currents of consciences; accepted by the surface, but little in accord with the lower strata of French society; getting out of scrapes by dint of artifice; governing too much and not reigning sufficiently; his own prime minister; excellent in the art of setting up the pettiness of realities as an obstacle to the immensity of ideas; combining with a true creative faculty of civilization, order, and organization, an indescribable spirit of pettifogging and chicanery; the founder of a family and at the same time its man-of-law; having something of Charlemagne and something of an attorney; in short, a

lofty and original figure, a prince who managed to acquire influence in spite of the anxiety of France, and power in spite of the jealousy of Europe. Louis Philippe will be ranked among the eminent men of his age, and would be classed among the most illustrious rulers of history, if he had loved glory but a little, and had had the same feeling for what is grand that he had for what is useful.

Louis Philippe had been handsome, and in his old age was still gracious. Though not always admired by the nation, he was always so by the mob; he had the art of pleasing and the gift of charm. He was deficient in majesty; he wore no crown, though a king, and had no white hair, though an old man. His manners belonged to the old school, and his habits to the new, — a mixture of the noble and the citizen which suited 1830. Louis Philippe was transition on a throne; he retained the old pronunciation and orthography, which he placed at the service of modern opinions; he was fond of Poland and Hungary, but he wrote "les Polonois," and pronounced "les Hongrais." He wore the uniform of the National Guard, like Charles X., and the ribbon of the Legion of Honour, like Napoleon.

He went but rarely to Mass, not at all to the chase, and never to the opera; he was incorruptible by priests, whippers-in, and ballet-girls. This was part of his middle-class popularity. He had no court. He went out with his umbrella under his arm; and this umbrella for a long time formed part of his *nimbus*. He was a bit of a mason, a bit of a gardener, and a bit of a surgeon; he bled a postilion who fell from his horse, and no more thought of going out without his lancet than Henry III. did without his dagger. The royalists ridiculed this absurd king, — the first who shed blood for the purpose of healing.

One deduction must be made in the charges which

history brings against Louis Philippe, — one against royalty, the second against the reign, and the third against the king; three columns, each of which gives a different total. Democratic right confiscated, progress made a matter of secondary interest, the protests of the streets violently repressed, the military execution of insurrections, revolt made to run the gantlet, the Rue Transnonain, the councils of war, the absorption of the real country by the legal country, the government on half shares with three hundred thousand privileged persons, — are the deeds of royalty; Belgium refused, Algeria too harshly conquered, with more barbarism than civilization, as in the case of India by the English, the breach of faith to Abd-el-Kader, Blaye, Deutz bought and Pritchard paid, — these are chargeable to the reign; while the policy which was more domestic than national was the work of the king.

As we see, when the proper deductions are made, the charge against the king is reduced. His great fault was that he was modest in the name of France. Whence comes this fault?

Louis Philippe was a king who was too paternal a king. This incubation of a family which is intended to hatch a dynasty, is afraid of everything, and does not like to be disturbed; hence arises excessive timidity, which is offensive to a nation which has July 14 in its civil traditions, and Austerlitz in its military annals.

Moreover, if we deduct the public duties which should be first fulfilled, the family of Louis Philippe deserved the deep tenderness which he felt for it. That domestic group was worthy of admiration. It combined virtue with talent. One of the daughters of Louis Philippe, — Marie d'Orléans, — placed the name of her race among artists as Charles d'Orléans placed it among poets. She threw her whole soul into a statue which she called Joan of Arc.

Two of Louis Philippe's sons drew from Metternich this demagogic praise: "They are young men whose like is rarely seen, and such princes as were never seen before."

This is the truth, without extenuating or setting down aught in malice, about Louis Philippe.

It was, in 1830, his good fortune to be Prince Equality, to be in his own person the contradiction of the Restoration and the Revolution, and to possess that alarming side of the revolutionist which becomes re-assuring in the governing power. There was never a more complete adaptation of the man to the event; the one entered into the other, and the incarnation took place. Louis Philippe is 1830 made man. He had also in his favour that great claim to the throne, — exile. He had been proscribed, a wanderer, and poor. He had lived by his own labour. In Switzerland, this heir to the richest princely domains of France was obliged to sell an old horse to buy food; at Reichenau, he gave lessons in mathematics, while his sister Adelaide embroidered and sewed. These memories connected with a king made the middle classes enthusiastic. With his own hands he had demolished the last iron cage at Mont St. Michel, erected by Louis XI., and used by Louis XV. He was the companion of Dumouriez, and the friend of Lafayette; he had belonged to the Jacobin Club; Mirabeau had tapped him on the shoulder; Danton had said to him, "Young man." At the age of twenty-four, in '93, being then M. de Chartres, he had witnessed from an obscure gallery in the Convention the trial of Louis XVI., so well named 'that poor tyrant.' The blind clairvoyance of the Revolution, destroying royalty in the king, and the king with royalty, while scarce noticing the man in the stern crushing of the idea; the vast storm of the assembly that constituted the tribunal; public wrath cross-examining; Capet not knowing what to answer; the frightful and stupefied vacillation of that

royal head beneath that raging blast; the relative innocence of all concerned in the catastrophe, of those who condemned as well as of him who was condemned, — he, Louis Philippe, had looked on at those things. He had contemplated that madness; he had seen the centuries arraigned before the bar of the Convention; he had seen behind Louis XVI., that unfortunate victim who was held responsible, the terrible culprit, monarchy, emerging from the darkness; and there lingered in his soul a respectful dread of that immense justice of the people, which is almost as impersonal as the justice of God.

The traces which the Revolution left upon him were prodigious. Its memory was like a living imprint of those great years, minute by minute. One day, in the presence of a witness whose statements we cannot doubt, he corrected from memory the entire letter A in the list of the Constituent Assembly.

Louis Philippe was an open-air king. During his reign the press was free, debates were free, conscience and speech were free. The laws of September are transparent. Though he knew the corrosive power of light upon privileges, he left his throne exposed to the light. History will give him credit for this loyal behaviour.

Louis Philippe, like all historic men who have passed from the stage, is now on his trial by the human conscience. His case is still in the lower court.

The hour when history speaks with its free and venerable accent, has not yet struck for him; the moment has not yet come to pronounce a final judgment on this king. Even the stern and illustrious historian, Louis Blanc, has recently toned down his first verdict. Louis Philippe was elected by the two hundred and twenty-one deputies in 1830, — that is to say, by a semi-parliament and a semi-revolution; and in any case, we cannot judge him here from the superior point of view proper to philosophy,

without certain reservations in the name of the absolute democratic principle. In the sight of the absolute, everything is usurpation which lies outside the rights of man first, and the rights of the people secondly; but what we can say even now, is that, however we may regard him, Louis Philippe, taken by himself, and viewed from the standpoint of human goodness, will remain, to use the ancient language of antique history, one of the best princes that ever sat upon a throne.

What has he against him? That throne. Take the king away from Louis Philippe, and the man remains. The man is good, — sometimes so good as to be admirable. Often in the midst of the gravest cares, after a day of struggle against the whole diplomacy of the continent, he returned to his apartments at night, and there, exhausted by fatigue and overcome with sleep, what did he do? He took up a brief, and spent the night in revising a criminal suit, considering that it was something to hold his own against Europe, but even greater to rescue a man from the hands of the executioner. He obstinately resisted his keeper of the seals; he disputed the scaffold inch by inch with his attorney-generals, those "chatterers of the law," as he called them. Sometimes piles of death-sentences covered his table; he examined them all, and was agonized at the thought of abandoning those wretched condemned heads. One day he said to the witness whom we just now quoted: "I won seven of them last night." During the early years of his reign the death-penalty was almost abolished, and the re-erection of the scaffold was a violence done to the king. As the Grève disappeared with the elder branch, a middle-class Grève was established under the name of the Barrière St. Jacques; for "practical men" felt the necessity of a quasi-legitimate guillotine. This was one of the victories of Casimir Perier, who represented the narrow side of the middle classes, over Louis

Philippe, who represented the liberal side. The king annotated Beccaria with his own hand. After the Fieschi machine, he exclaimed: "What a pity that I was not wounded! Then I could have shown mercy." On another occasion, alluding to the resistance offered by his ministers, he wrote, with reference to a political criminal, who is one of the most illustrious men of the day: "His pardon is granted; all that I have to do now is to obtain it." Louis Philippe was as gentle as Louis IX., and as good as Henri IV.

In our opinion, any man deemed good by history, in which goodness is a rare pearl, is almost superior to one who was great.

As Louis Philippe has been severely judged by some, and harshly, perhaps, by others, it is very natural that a man, himself a phantom at the present day, who knew that king, should testify in his favour before history; this testimony, whatever its value may be, is evidently, and above all, disinterested. An epitaph written by a dead man is sincere. One shadow may console another shadow; the sharing of the same darkness confers the right to praise. There is no fear that it will ever be said of two tombs in exile: "This one flattered that one."

CHAPTER IV.

CRACKS IN THE FOUNDATION.

AT this moment, when the drama we are recounting is about to enter one of those tragic clouds which cover the beginning of the reign of Louis Philippe, it was quite necessary that there should be no misunderstanding, and that this book should give an explanation in regard to that king. Louis Philippe had entered upon the royal authority without violence or direct action on his part, by virtue of a revolutionary change of course, which was evidently quite distinct from the real object of the Revolution, but in which he, the Duke d'Orléans, exercised no personal initiative. He was born a prince, and believed himself elected a king. He had not given himself this commission, nor had he taken it; it was offered to him, and he accepted it, convinced, wrongly to be sure, but still convinced, that the offer was in accordance with right, and the acceptance of it in accordance with duty. Hence came honest possession; and we say in all conscience that, as Louis Philippe was honest in the possession, and democracy honest in its attack, the amount of terror discharged by social struggles cannot be laid either to the king or the democracy. The clash of principles resembles the clash of the elements; ocean defends the water, and the hurricane the air; the king defends royalty, democracy defends the people; the relative, which is monarchy, resists the absolute, which is the republic. Society bleeds in this conflict, but that

which is its suffering to-day will be its salvation at a later date; and, in any case, those who struggle are not to be blamed, for one of the two parties must plainly be mistaken. Right does not stand, like the Colossus of Rhodes, on two shores at once, with one foot in the republic, the other in royalty. It is indivisible, and entirely on one side; but those who are mistaken are so in all sincerity. A blind man is no more a culprit than a Vendean is a brigand. We must, therefore, impute these formidable collisions to the fatality of things alone. Whatever these tempests may be, human irresponsibility is mingled with them.

Let us finish our statement!

The government of 1830 had a hard life of it from the beginning. Born yesterday, it was obliged to combat to-day. Scarce installed, it was already everywhere conscious of vague movements of traction on the machinery of July, so recently constructed, and still anything but solid.

Resistance sprang up on the morrow; perhaps it was born on the day before. From month to month the hostility increased, and instead of being latent became patent.

The Revolution of July, frowned upon by kings outside of France, was diversely interpreted in France, as we have said.

God imparts to men His visible will in events, — an obscure text written in a mysterious language. Men at once make themselves translations of it, — hasty, incorrect translations, full of errors, gaps, and misinterpretations. Very few minds comprehend the divine language. The most sagacious, the calmest, and the most profound, decipher slowly, and when they appear with their version, the work has been done long before; there are already twenty translations offered for sale. From each translation springs a party, and from each misinterpretation a

faction; and each party believes that it has the only true text, and each faction believes that it possesses the light.

Power itself is often a faction.

There are, in revolutions, men who swim against the current; they are the old parties.

As revolutions issue from the right to revolt, the old parties that cling to heirdom by the grace of God, fancy that they have a right to revolt against them; but this is an error, for in revolutions the rebel is not the people, but the king. Revolution is precisely the contrary of revolt. Every revolution, being a normal outcome, contains within itself its legitimacy, which false revolutionists sometimes dishonour, but which endures even when sullied, and survives even when bleeding. Revolutions spring not from an accident, but from necessity. A revolution is a return from the factitious to the real. It takes place because it must.

The old legitimist parties did not the less assail the Revolution of 1830 with all the violence which arises from false reasoning. Errors are excellent projectiles. They skilfully struck it at the spot where it was vulnerable, — the flaw in its cuirass, its lack of logic; they attacked this revolution in its royalty. They cried to it, "Revolution, why this king?" Factions are blind men who take good aim.

This cry the revolutionists also raised; but coming from them, it was logical. What was blindness in the legitimists was clear-sightedness in the democrats. 1830 had made the people bankrupt. Indignant democracy reproached it with the deed.

The establishment of July struggled between these attacks, made by the past and the future. It represented the present minute contending on one side with monarchical ages, on the other with eternal right.

Then, again, 1830 being no longer a revolution, and

having become a monarchy, was obliged to take precedence of Europe. It was a further difficulty to maintain peace. Harmony persisted in, contrary to good sense, is often more onerous than war. From this secret conflict, ever muzzled but ever growling, emerged armed peace, that ruinous expedient of civilization suspecting itself. The royalty of July rebelled in the team of European cabinets. Metternich would gladly have put it in kicking-straps. Impelled by progress in France, it impelled in its turn the slowly moving European monarchies; and while towed, it also towed.

At home, however, pauperism, beggary, wages, education, the penal code, prostitution, the fate of woman, wealth, misery, production, consumption, division, exchange, money, capital, the rights of capital and the rights of labour, — all these questions were multiplied above society, and formed a crushing weight.

Outside of political parties, properly so called, another movement became manifest. A philosophic fermentation responded to the democratic fermentation. The Elect were troubled like the crowd, — differently, but quite as much.

Thinking men meditated, while the soil, — that is to say, the people, — traversed by revolutionary currents, trembled beneath them with vague epileptic shocks. These thinkers, some isolated, but others assembled in families and almost in communion, stirred up social questions, peacefully but profoundly, — impassive miners, who quietly hollowed their galleries in the heart of a volcano, scarce disturbed by the dull commotions and the fires of which they caught a glimpse.

This tranquillity was not the least beautiful spectacle of this agitated epoch.

These men left to political parties the question of rights, and devoted themselves to the question of happiness.

What they wished to extract from society was the welfare of man. They elevated material questions, — questions of agriculture, trade, and commerce, — almost to the dignity of a religion. In civilization, such as it has been constituted, a little by God, much by man, instincts are combined, aggregated, and amalgamated so as to form a bed-rock, by virtue of a dynamic law patiently studied by social economists, those geologists of politics. These men, who grouped themselves under different appellations, but who may all be designated by the generic title of socialists, tried to pierce that rock and cause the living waters of human felicity to gush forth.

Their labours embraced all questions, from that of the scaffold to that of war. To the rights of man, as proclaimed by the French Revolution, they added the rights of woman and the rights of children.

No one will be surprised that for various reasons we do not here discuss thoroughly, from the theoretical point of view, the questions raised by socialism. We limit ourselves to indicating them.

All the problems which the socialists proposed to solve — setting aside cosmogonic visions, revery, and mysticism — may be carried back to two principal problems.

The first problem, to produce wealth; the second, to distribute it. The first problem contains the question of labour, the second the question of wages. In the first, the point is the employment of strength, and in the second the distribution of enjoyment. From a good employment of strength results public power, and from a good distribution of enjoyment individual happiness. By a good distribution, we mean not an equal, but an equitable distribution. The first equality is equity. From these two things combined, public power abroad and individual happiness at home, results social prosperity, — that is to say, man happy, the citizen free, and the nation great.

England solves the first of these two problems, — she creates wealth admirably, but distributes it badly. This solution, which is complete on one side only, fatally leads her to these two extremes: monstrous opulence and monstrous misery. All enjoyment belongs to the few, all privation to the rest, — that is to say, to the people; privilege, exception, monopoly, and feudalism spring up from labour itself. It is a false and dangerous situation which bases public power on private want, and roots the grandeur of the State in the suffering of the individual. It is a badly constituted grandeur which combines all the material elements, and into which no moral element enters.

Communism and agrarian law fancy that they solve the second problem; but they are mistaken. Their distribution kills production. Equal division destroys emulation, and consequently labour. It is a distribution made by the butcher, who slaughters what he divides. Hence it is impossible to be satisfied with these pretended solutions. To kill riches is not to distribute them. The two problems must be solved together in order to be properly solved; the two solutions must be combined and form but one. If you solve only the first of these problems, you will be Venice, you will be England. You will have, like Venice, an artificial power, or like England, a material power; you will be the wicked rich man. You will perish by violence, as Venice died; or by bankruptcy, as England will fall. And the world will leave you to die and to fall, because it allows everything to die and to fall which is solely selfishness, and everything which does not represent to the human race a virtue or an idea.

Of course it will be understood that by the words Venice and England we do not mean the peoples, but the social structures, — the oligarchies that weigh down the nations, and not the nations themselves. Nations have

ever our respect and sympathy. Venice, as a people, will live again; England, as the aristocracy, will fall, but England the nation is immortal. Having said this, let us proceed.

Solve the two problems: encourage the rich and protect the poor; suppress misery; put an end to the unjust oppression of the weak by the strong; bridle the iniquitous jealousy which the man still on the road feels for him who has reached the journey's end; adjust, mathematically and fraternally, the wage to the labour; blend gratuitous and enforced education with the growth of childhood, and make science the basis of manhood; develop the intelligence while you occupy the hand; be at once a powerful people and a family of happy men; democratize property, not by abolishing, but by universalizing it, so that every citizen, without exception, may be a land-owner (an easier task than is supposed),— in two words, learn to produce wealth and to distribute it, and you will possess at once material greatness and moral greatness; and you will be worthy to call yourself France.

This was what socialism, outside and beyond a few mistaken sects, said; this is what it sought in facts and roughly sketched in the minds of men. Admirable efforts! Sacred attempts!

These doctrines, these theories, these resistances; the unexpected necessity for the statesman to settle with philosophers; glimpses of confused evidences; a new policy to create in accord with the Old World, while not too greatly in discord with the new revolutionary ideal; a situation in which Lafayette must be used to defend Polignac; the intuition of progress apparent behind the riot, the Chambers, and the street; the king's faith in the Revolution; the rivalries around him to be balanced, possibly some eventual resignation born of the vague accept-

ance of a definite and superior right; his wish to remain true to his race, his family affections, his sincere respect for the people, and his own honesty, — all these things painfully affected Louis Philippe; and at times, strong and courageous though he was, he was crushed by the difficulty of being a king.

He felt beneath his feet a formidable disintegration, which, however, was not a crumbling to dust, France being more France than ever.

Dark storm-clouds gathered on the horizon; a strange shadow, growing ever nearer and nearer, gradually extended over men, things, and ideas, — a shadow that sprang from anger and systems. Everything that had been hastily suppressed, stirred and fermented; and at times the conscience of the honest man held its breath, there was such an uneasy feeling produced by that atmosphere, in which sophisms were mingled with truths. Minds trembled in the social anxiety, like leaves at the approach of a storm. The electric tension was such that at certain moments the first-comer, a stranger, brought light. Then the twilight obscurity fell over the whole scene again. At intervals, deep, loud mutterings allowed an opinion to be formed as to the amount of thunder which the cloud contained.

Twenty months had scarce elapsed since the Revolution of July, and the year 1832 had opened with an imminent and menacing appearance. The distress of the people; workmen without bread; the last Prince of Condé swallowed up by the shadows; Brussels expelling the Nassaus, as Paris had done the Bourbons; Belgium offering itself to a French prince, and given to an English prince; the Russian hatred of Nicholas; behind us two demons of the South, — Ferdinand in Spain and Miguel in Portugal; the earth trembling in Italy; Metternich stretching his hand over Bologna; France making short work of

Austria at Ancona; in the North, the sinister sound of a hammer, again enclosing Poland in her coffin; throughout Europe, angry eyes watching France; England, a suspicious ally, prepared to give a push to any who staggered, and to throw herself on him who fell; the peerage taking refuge behind Beccaria to refuse four heads to the law; the *fleurs-de-lis* erased from the king's coaches; the cross dragged from Notre-Dame; Lafayette enfeebled, Lafitte ruined; Benjamin Constant dead in poverty; Casimir Perier dead in the exhaustion of his power; political and social disease declaring themselves simultaneously in the two capitals of the kingdom, — one the city of thought, the other the city of toil; in Paris, a civil war; in Lyons, a servile war; and in both cities the same furnace-glow, — a volcanic crimson on the brow of the people; the South turned fanatic; the West troubled; the Duchess de Berry in the Vendée; plots, conspiracies, insurrections, and cholera added to the gloomy roar of ideas, the gloomy tumult of events.

CHAPTER V.

FACTS FROM WHICH HISTORY SPRINGS, BUT WHICH HISTORY IGNORES.

TOWARD the end of April, matters became aggravated, and the ferment assumed the proportions of an ebullition. Ever since 1830 there had been small partial revolts here and there, quickly suppressed, but breaking out again, — the sign of a vast underlying conflagration. Something terrible was at hand. A glimpse could be caught of the lineaments of a possible revolution, though still indistinct and badly lighted. France watched Paris; Paris watched the Faubourg St. Antoine.

The Faubourg St. Antoine, slowly heated, had reached the boiling-point. The wine-shops in the Rue de Charonne were grave and stormy, though the conjunction of those two epithets, as applied to wine-shops, seems singular. The government was purely and simply put upon its trial there. Men publicly discussed whether *they should fight or remain quiet.* There were back shops where workmen were forced to swear that they would take to the streets at the first cry of alarm, "and would fight

without counting the enemy's number." Once they had taken this pledge, a man seated in a corner of the wine-shop "shouted in a sonorous voice," "You understand! You have sworn!" Sometimes they went upstairs, to a private room on the first-floor, where scenes almost resembling masonic ceremonies were enacted, and the novice took oaths, "to render a service to himself as well as to the fathers of families," — such was the formula. In the tap-rooms, "subversive" pamphlets were read; and, as a secret report of that day says, "they pitched into the government." Remarks like the following could be heard: "I do not know the names of the chiefs. We others shall not know the day till two hours beforehand." One workman said: "There are three hundred of us! let each subscribe ten sous, and we shall have one hundred and fifty francs with which to manufacture bullets and gunpowder. Another said: "I do not ask for six months, I do not ask for two. In less than a fortnight we shall be face to face with the government. We can face them with twenty-five thousand men." Another said: "I do not go to bed of nights now, for I am making cartridges." From time to time "well-dressed" men, "looking like tradesmen," "came," "made a fuss," and they had "an air of command," shook hands with the "most important," and then went away, never staying longer than ten minutes. Significant remarks were exchanged in whispers: "The plot is ripe, the thing is ready; "to borrow the expression of one of those present, "this was buzzed about by every one there." The excitement was so great that one day a workman said openly in a wine-shop: "But we have no weapons!" One of his comrades replied: "The soldiers have!" — unconsciously parodying Bonaparte's proclamation to the army of Italy. "When they had any very great secret," a report adds, "they did not communicate it there." We

hardly understand what they could conceal after what they had said.

These meetings were sometimes periodical. At certain of them there were never more than eight or ten members present, and they were always the same. At others any one who liked went in, and the room was so crowded that they were obliged to stand. Some went out of enthusiasm and passion, others "because it was on the way to their work." Just as during the Revolution, there were female patriots in these wine-shops, who kissed the newcomers.

Other expressive facts were brought to light. A man entered a wine-shop, drank, and went away, saying: "Wine-dealer, the Revolution will pay what is due." Revolutionary agents were appointed at a wine-shop opposite the Rue de Charonne, and the ballot was taken in caps. Workmen assembled at the house of a fencing-master who gave lessons in the Rue de Cotte. There was a trophy of arms, made of wooden sabres, canes, cudgels, and foils. One day the buttons were removed from the foils. A workman said: "We are five-and-twenty; but they do not reckon upon me, as they consider me a machine." This machine at a later date became Quenisset. Things that were premeditated gradually acquired a strange notoriety. A woman who was sweeping her doorsteps said to another woman: "They have been working hard at cartridges for a long time past." In the open streets, proclamations addressed to the National Guards of the departments were read aloud. One of them was signed, Burtot, wine-dealer.

One day a man with a large beard and an Italian accent leaped on a stone post at the door of a dram-shop, in the Marché Lenoir, and read aloud a singular document, which seemed to emanate from some occult power. Groups assembled round him and applauded. The passages

which most excited the mob were collected and noted down.

"Our doctrines are impeded, our proclamations are torn down, our bill-stickers are watched and cast into prison. . . . The fall in cottons has converted many middle-class men to our views. . . . The future of nations is being worked out in our obscure ranks. . . . These are the terms laid down: action or reaction, revolution or counter-revolution. For in our age no one still believes in inertia or immobility. For the people, or against the people, that is the question. There is no other. . . . On the day when we cease to please you, destroy us ; but till then help us in our onward march."

All this took place in broad daylight.

Other facts, of even more audacious nature, appeared suspicious to the people, owing to their very audacity. On April 4, 1832, a passer-by leaped on the post at the corner of the Rue St. Marguerite and shouted: "I am a Babouvist!" But the people scented Gisquet under Babœuf.

Among other things, this man said: "Down with property! The opposition of the Left is cowardly and treacherous; when it would gain its point, it preaches revolution. It is democratic to escape defeat, and royalist that it need not fight. The republicans are feathered beasts; distrust the republicans, citizen-workmen!"

"Silence, citizen-spy!" shouted a workman; and this put an end to the speech.

Mysterious events occurred.

At nightfall a workman met a "well-dressed" man near the canal, who said to him: "Where art thou going, citizen?" "Sir," answered the workman, "I have not the honour of knowing you." "I know thee, though;" and the man added, "Fear nothing; I am the agent of the committee. It is suspected that thou art not to be trusted. But thou knowest that there is an eye upon

thee if thou darest to reveal anything." Then he shook the workman's hand and went away, saying: "We shall meet again soon."

The police, who were on the alert, overheard singular dialogues, not only in the wine-shops, but on the street. "Get yourself admitted soon," said a weaver to a cabinet-maker. "Why so?" "There will be shots to fire." Two passers-by in rags exchanged the following peculiar remarks, which were big with evident Jacquerie: "Who governs us?" "Monsieur Philippe." "No, the middle classes." It would be an error to suppose that we attach evil meaning to the word *Jacquerie;* the Jacques were the poor.

Another time a man was heard saying to his companion: "We have a famous plan of attack." The following fragment was picked up from a private conversation between four men squatting in a ditch, near the Barrière du Trône: "Everything possible will be done to prevent his walking about Paris any longer."

Who is *he?* There is a menacing obscurity about it. The "principal chiefs," as they were called in the faubourg, held aloof, but were supposed to assemble for consultation at a wine-shop near the Point St. Eustache. A man named Aug——, chief of the society for the relief of tailors, was supposed to act as central intermediary between the chiefs and the Faubourg St. Antoine. Still, there was always a considerable amount of mystery about these chiefs; and no certain knowledge could weaken the singular pride of this answer, made at a later date, by a prisoner brought before the Court of Peers.

"Who was your chief?"

"I knew none, and recognized none."

As yet there were only words, transparent but vague; sometimes mere idle reports, rumours, and hear-say; but

other signs appeared ere long. A carpenter engaged in the Rue de Reuilly in nailing up boards for a fence round a piece of ground on which a house was being built, found a piece of a torn letter, on which the following lines were still legible: " . . . The committee must take measures to prevent recruiting in the sections for the different societies."

And as a postscript: "We learn that there are guns at No. 5 Rue du Faubourg Poissonnière, to the number of five or six thousand, at a gunsmith's in the yard. The section possesses no arms."

What startled the carpenter, and induced him to show the thing to his neighbours, was the fact that a few paces farther on he found another paper, also torn, and even more significant, of which we reproduce a fac-simile, on account of the historic interest of these strange documents.

Q.	C.	D.	S.	Learn this list by heart; after that, tear it up. The men admitted will do the same when you have given them their orders. Health and Fraternity, L. u. og. a^{l}. fe.

Persons in the secret of this discovery at the time did not learn the meaning of the four capital letters till later: *quinturions*, *centurions*, *decurions*, and *scouts*, and the sense of the letters, *u. og. a*^{l}. *fe.*, which were a date, and signified April 15, 1832. Under each capital letter were written names, followed by very characteristic notes. Thus: Q *Bannerel.* 8 guns. 83 cartridges. A safe man. — C *Bourbière.* 1 pistol. 40 cartridges. — D *Rollet.* 1

foil. 1 pistol. 1 lb. gunpowder. — S *Tessin.* 1 sabre. 1 cartouche-box. — Exact. — *Terreur.* 8 guns. Brave, &c.

Lastly, this carpenter found, also in the same enclosure, a third paper, on which was written in pencil, but very legibly, this enigmatical list : —

Unité : Blanchard, Arbre sec. 6.
Barra. Sixteen. Salle au Comte.
Kosciusko, Aubrey, the butcher?
J. J. R.
Cayus Gracchus.
Right of revision. Dufond. Four.
Downfall of the Girondists. Derbac. Maubuèe.
Washington. Pinson, 1 pist., 86 cart.
Marseillaise.
Sover. of the people. Michel. Quincampoix. Sabre.
Hoche.
Marceau, Plato. Arbre sec.
Warsaw, Tilly, crier of the *Populaire.*

The honest citizen in whose hands this list fell knew its purport. It seemed that the list was the complete nomenclature of the sections of the fourth arrondissement of the Society of the Rights of Man, with the names and addresses of the chiefs of sections. At the present day, when all these obscure facts have become historic, they may be published. We may add that the foundation of the Society of the Rights of Man seems to have been posterior to the date on which this paper was found, and so it was possibly only a sketch.

After propositions and words, after written information, material facts began to pierce through. In the Rue Popincourt, at the shop of a broker, seven pieces of gray paper, all folded alike, lengthwise and four times, were found in a drawer; these sheets contained twenty-six squares of the same gray paper, folded in the shape of cartridges, and a card on which was written : —

Saltpetre	12 oz.
Sulphur	2 "
Charcoal	2½ "
Water	8 "

The report of the seizure stated that there was a strong smell of gunpowder in the drawer.

A mason, returning home after his day's work, left a small parcel on a bench near the bridge of Austerlitz; it was carried to the guardhouse and opened, and from it were taken two printed dialogues signed "Lahautière," a song called "Workmen, combine!" and a tin box full of cartridges. A workman drinking with his comrade bade him feel how hot he was, and the other felt a pistol under his jacket. In a ditch on the boulevard between Père la Chaise and the Barrière du Trône, some children, playing at the most deserted spot, discovered under a heap of shavings and rubbish, a bag containing a bullet-mould, a wooden punch for making cartridges, a wooden bowl in which there were grains of gunpowder, and an iron pot in which there were evident traces of melted lead.

Some police agents, suddenly entering at five in the morning the room of one Pardon, who was at a later date a member of the Barricade Merry section and killed in the insurrection of 1834, found him standing near his bed, holding in his hand some cartridges which he was in the act of making.

At the hour when workmen generally rest, two men were seen to meet between the Picpus and Charenton barriers, in a lane running between two walls, near a tavern which has a game of ninepins before the door. One took a pistol from under his blouse which he handed to the other. As he gave it to him he noticed that the perspiration on his chest had damped the gunpowder; he therefore primed the pistol afresh, and added more powder. Then the two men parted. A man by the

name of Gallais, afterward killed in the April affair in the Rue Beaubourg, boasted that he had at home seven hundred cartridges and twenty-four gun-flints. One day the government received information that arms and two hundred thousand cartridges had just been distributed in the faubourg, and the next week, thirty thousand additional cartridges were given out. The remarkable thing was that the police could not seize one of them. An intercepted letter stated: "The day is not far distant when eighty thousand patriots will be under arms in four hours."

All this fermentation was public, we might almost say calm. The impending insurrection prepared its storm quietly in the face of the government. No singularity was lacking in this crisis, which was still subterranean, but already perceptible. The citizens spoke peacefully to the workmen of what was preparing. They said, "How is the revolt coming on?" in the same tone that they would have said, "How is your wife?" A furniture broker in the Rue Moreau asked: "Well, when do you make your attack?" Another shopkeeper said: "They will make their attack soon; I know it. A month ago there were fifteen thousand of them and now there are twenty-five thousand." He offered his gun, and a neighbour offered a pocket-pistol which he was willing to sell for seven francs.

The revolutionary fever spread, and no point in Paris or of France escaped it. The artery throbbed everywhere, and a network of secret societies began to spread over the country like the membranes which spring up from certain inflammations and form in the human body. From the Association of the Friends of the People, which was at the same time public and secret, sprang the Society of the Rights of Man, which dated one of its orders of the day: "Pluviose, Year 40 of the Republican

era," — a society which was destined to survive even the decrees which suppressed it, and did not hesitate to give to its sections significant titles like the following: —

Pikes. The Tocsin. The Alarm-gun. The Phrygian cap. January 21. The Beggars. The Mendicants. Forward march. Robespierre. The Level. Ça ira.

The Society of the Rights of Man engendered the Society of Action, composed of impatient men who broke away and hurried forward. Other associations tried to recruit themselves from the great mother societies; and the members of sections complained of being tormented. Such were the Gallic Society and the Organizing Committee of the Municipalities; such the associations for the liberty of the press, for individual liberty, for the instruction of the people, and against indirect taxation. Next, we have the Society of Equalitarian Workmen, divided into three parties, — the equalitarians, the communists, and the reformers. Then, again, the army of the Bastilles, — a cohort possessing a military organization, four men being commanded by a corporal, ten by a sergeant, twenty by a sub-lieutenant, and forty by a lieutenant; there were never more than five men who knew each other. This is a creation which combines precaution and audacity, and seems to be marked with the genius of Venice. The central committee, which formed the head, had two arms, — the Society of Action and the Army of the Bastilles. A legitimist association, the Knights of Fidelity, agitated among these republican affiliations, but was denounced and repudiated. The Parisian societies had branches in the principal cities; Lyons, Nantes, Lille, had their Society of the Rights of Man, The Charbonnière, and the Free Men. Aix had a revolutionary society called the Cougourde. We have already mentioned this word.

At Paris, the Faubourg Marceau was no less busy than the Faubourg St. Antoine, and the schools were quite as

excited as the faubourgs. A coffee-shop in the Rue St. Hyacinthe, and the Estaminet des Sept Billiards in the Rue des Mathurins St. Jacques, served as the gathering-place for the students. The Society of the Friends of the A. B. C. affiliated with the Mutualists of Angers, and the Cougourde of Aix assembled, as we have seen, at the Café Musain. These same young men also met, as we have already said, at a wine-shop and eating-house near the Rue Montdétour, called Corinth. These meetings were secret, but others were as public as possible; and we may judge of their boldness by this fragment of a cross-examination held in one of the ulterior trials: "Where was this meeting held?" "In the Rue de la Paix." — "At whose house?" "In the street." — "What sections were there?" "Only one." — "Which one?" "The Manuel section." — "Who was the chief?" "Myself." — "You are too young to have yourself formed this serious resolve to attack the government. Whence came your instructions?" "From the central committee."

The army was undermined at the same time as the population, as was proved at a later date by the movements at Béford, Lunéville, and Épinal. Hopes were built on the 52d, 5th, 8th, and 37th regiments, and on the 20th light infantry. In Burgundy and the southern towns the liberty-tree was planted, — that is to say, a pole surmounted by a red cap.

Such was the situation.

This situation was rendered more sensible and more marked by the Faubourg St. Antoine, as we remarked in the beginning, than by any other group of the population. There was the stitch in the side. This old faubourg, peopled like an ant-hill, laborious, courageous, and passionate as a hive of bees, quivered with expectation and the desire for a commotion. Everything was in a state of agitation there, but labour was not suspended on that

account. No idea can be conveyed of that sharp and yet sombre face. There is in this faubourg crushing distress, hidden under attic roofs, and also rare and ardent minds. It is especially in the matter of distress and intellect that it is dangerous for extremes to meet.

The Faubourg St. Antoine had other causes for excitement; for it received the counter-stroke of commercial crises, failures, strikes, and stoppages, which are inherent in all great political convulsions. In revolutionary times, misery is both cause and effect. The blow which it deals rebounds upon itself. This population, full of haughty virtue, capable of the highest amount of latent heat, ever ready to take up arms, prompt to explode, irritated, profound, and undermined, seemed to be only waiting for a spark to fall. Whenever certain sparks float on the horizon, driven by the wind of events, we cannot help thinking of the Faubourg St. Antoine, and of the fearful chance which has placed at the gates of Paris this powder-magazine of suffering and ideas.

The wine-shops of the Faubourg St. Antoine, which have been more than once referred to in this sketch, possess historic notoriety. In times of trouble, people grow intoxicated in them more on words than wine. A sort of prophetic spirit and an effluvium of the future circulates there, swelling hearts and ennobling minds. These wine-shops resemble those taverns on the Mons Aventinus, built over the Sibyl's cave, and communicating with the sacred blasts of the depths below, — taverns whose tables were almost tripods, and where people drank what Ennius calls " the Sibylline wine."

The Faubourg St. Antoine is a reservoir of the people. Revolutionary earthquakes create fissures in it, through which the sovereignty of the people flows. This sovereignty may do evil; it may err like any other; but, even

when led astray, it is great. We may say of it, as of the blind Cyclops, "*Ingens.*"

In '93, according as the idea which was uppermost was good or bad, according as it was the day of fanaticism or of enthusiasm, savage legions or heroic bands issued from the Faubourg St. Antoine. Savage, — let us explain that word. What did those bristling men want, who, in the beginning of the revolutionary chaos, rushed upon old overthrown Paris, in rags, yelling and ferocious, with uplifted clubs and raised pikes ? They wanted to put an end to oppression, an end to tyranny, an end to the sword ; work for men, instruction for children, social gentleness for woman, liberty, equality, fraternity, bread for all, the idea for all, — the Edenization of the world. Progress ; and that holy, good, and sweet thing, progress, they, driven to extremes, claimed in terrible fashion with upraised weapons and curses. They were savages, half-naked, we grant, but the savages of civilization.

They proclaimed the right furiously, and wished to force the human race into paradise, even were it with trembling and horror. They seemed barbarians, and were saviours ; they demanded light while wearing the mask of night.

Face to face with these men, stern, we admit, and terrifying, but stern and terrifying for good ends, there are other men, smiling, embroidered, gilded, be-ribboned, in silk stockings, with white feathers, yellow gloves, and lacquered shoes, who, leaning upon a velvet-covered table, beside a marble chimney-piece, gently insist on the maintenance and preservation of the past, of the middle ages, of divine right, of fanaticism, of ignorance, of slavery, of the death-penalty, and of war, glorifying in low tones and with great politeness the sword, the stake, and the scaffold. For our part, were we compelled to make a choice

between the barbarians of civilization and the civilized men of barbarism, we would choose the barbarians.

But, thanks be to Heaven! another choice is possible; no fall down an abyss is required, either before us or behind,—neither despotism nor terrorism. We wish for progress on a gentle incline.

God provides for this. God's whole policy lies in smoothing steep places.

CHAPTER VI.

ENJOLRAS AND HIS LIEUTENANTS.

ABOUT this period Enjolras made a sort of mysterious census, in view of a possible event. All were assembled in council at the Café Musain. Enjolras said, mingling a few half-enigmatical but significant metaphors with his words: —

"It behooves us to know how we stand, and on whom we can count. If combatants are wanted, they must be provided. There is no harm in having weapons to strike with. Passers-by always run a greater chance of being gored when there are bulls in the road than when there are none. So, suppose we count the herd. How many of us are there? This task must not be deferred till to-morrow. Revolutionists should always be in a hurry; progress has no time to lose. Let us distrust the unexpected, and not allow ourselves to be taken unawares. We must go over all the seams which we have sewn, and see whether they hold; and this job must be done to-day. Courfeyrac, you will see the Polytechnic students, for this is their day for going out. To-day is Wednesday.

Feuilly, you will see those of La Glacière, will you not? Combeferre has promised to go to Picpus. There is a fine swarm there. Bahorel will visit the Estrapade. Prouvaire, the masons are growing lukewarm; you will bring us news from the lodge in the Rue de Grenelle St. Honoré. Joly will go to Dupuytren's clinic, and feel the pulse of the medical school. Bossuet will stroll round the court-house and talk with the law students. I take the Cougourde myself."

"That settles everything," said Courfeyrac.

"No."

"What else is there?"

"Another very important matter."

"What is that?" asked Combeferre.

"The Barrière du Maine," replied Enjolras.

Enjolras was absorbed in thought for a moment, and then continued: —

"At the Barrière du Maine there are marble-workers, stone-cutters, and painters, — an enthusiastic body, but subject to chills. I do not know what has been the matter with them for some time past, but they are thinking of other things. Their ardour is dying out, and they spend their time in playing at dominos. Some one should certainly go and talk to them rather seriously. They meet at Richefeu's, where they may be found between twelve and one o'clock. Those ashes must be warmed up, and I had intended to intrust the task to that absent-minded Marius, who is a good fellow on the whole; but he no longer comes here. I need some one for the Barrière du Maine, and have no one left."

"Why, here I am," said Grantaire.

"You?"

"Yes, me."

"What! You indoctrinate republicans? You warm up chilled hearts in the name of principles?"

"Why not?"

"Can you possibly be fit for anything?"

"Well, I have a vague ambition to be so."

"You believe in nothing."

"I believe in you."

"Grantaire, will you do a service?"

"Anything. Clean your boots."

"Well, do not interfere in our affairs, but sleep off your absinthe."

"You are an ungrateful fellow, Enjolras!"

"You the man to go to the Barrière du Maine! You capable of it!"

"I am capable of going down the Rue des Grès, crossing St. Michael's Square, cutting through the Rue Monsieur le Prince, taking the Rue de Vaugirard, passing the Carmelites, turning into the Rue d'Assas, reaching the Rue Cherche Midi, leaving behind me the Council of War, measuring the Rue des Vielles-Tuileries, striding across the boulevard, following the Chaussée du Maine, passing the barrier, and entering Richefeu's. I am capable of all that, and so are my shoes."

"Do you know anything of the men at Richefeu's?"

"Not much."

"What will you say to them?"

"Talk to them about Robespierre, Danton, and principles."

"You!"

"I. You really do not do me justice; for when I make up my mind to it, I am terrible. I have read Prudhomme, I know the social contract, and have by heart my constitution of the Year II. 'The liberty of the citizen ends where the liberty of another citizen begins.' Do you take me for a brute? I have an old assignat in my drawer. The Rights of Man, the Sovereignty of the People. The deuce! I am a bit of a Hébertist myself. I can

discourse splendid things for six hours at a stretch, watch in hand."

"Be serious," said Enjolras.

"I am severe," answered Grantaire.

Enjolras reflected for a few seconds, and then seemed to have made up his mind.

"Grantaire," he said gravely, "I consent to try you. You shall go to the Barrière du Maine."

Grantaire lived in furnished lodgings close to the Café Musain. He went away, and returned five minutes after, — he had been home to put on a waistcoat of the Robespierre cut.

"Red," he said, on entering, and looked intently at Enjolras.

Then with an energetic gesture he turned back on his chest the two scarlet points of the waistcoat, and walking up to Enjolras, whispered in his ear: "Never fear!" He cocked his hat boldly, and went out. A quarter of an hour after, the back room of the Café Musain was deserted. All the friends of the A. B. C. had gone in various directions about their business. Enjolras, who had reserved the Cougourde for himself, was the last to leave. Those members of the Aix Cougourde who were in Paris at that period, assembled on the plain of Issy, in one of the abandoned quarries so numerous on that side of Paris.

As Enjolras walked toward the meeting-place, he took a mental review of the situation. The gravity of events was visible. When facts, which are the forerunners of latent social disease move heavily, the slightest complication checks and impedes their action. It is a phenomenon from which ruin and regeneration spring. Enjolras caught a glimpse of a luminous upheaving behind the dark clouds of the future. Who knew whether the moment might not be at hand when the people would again take

possession of their rights. What a splendid spectacle! the Revolution majestically taking possession of France once more, and saying to the world: "To be continued to-morrow!" Enjolras was satisfied. The furnace was aglow. He had at that self-same moment a gun-powder train of friends scattered over Paris. He mentally compared Combeferre's philosophic and penetrating eloquence, Feuilly's cosmopolitan enthusiasm, Courfeyrac's animation, Bahorel's laugh, Jean Prouvaire's melancholy, Joly's learning, and Bossuet's sarcasms to a sort of electric spark, which took fire, everywhere at once. All were at work. Most certainly, the result would answer to the effort. That was good. It made him think of Grantaire.

"Stay," he said to himself; "the Barrière du Maine is not much out of my way. Suppose I go to Richefeu's and see what Grantaire is doing, and how he is getting on."

It was striking one by the Vaugirard church when Enjolras reached Richefeu's low smoking-room. He pushed open the door, went in, folded his arms, letting the door slam against his shoulders, and looked about the room, which was full of tables, men, and tobacco-smoke.

A voice rang through the clouds of smoke, sharply interrupted by another voice.

It was Grantaire talking with some opponent.

Grantaire was seated opposite another man, at a marble table covered with sawdust and studded with dominos. He smote the marble with his fist, and this is what Enjolras heard: —

"Double-six."

"Fours."

"The pig! I have n't any left."

"You are dead. Two."

"Six."

"Three."
"One."
"My turn."
"Four points."
"Hardly."
"It is yours."
"I made an enormous mistake."
"You are getting on all right."
"Fifteen."
"Seven more."
"That makes me twenty-two [pensively], — twenty-two."
"You did not expect that double-six. Had I played it at first, it would have changed the whole game."
"Another."
"An ace."
"An ace! Well, a five!"
"I have n't one."
"You played last, I believe?"
"Yes."
"A blank."
"What luck he has! Ah, you are lucky! [A long revery.] A two."
"An ace."
"I've neither a five nor an ace. That's bad for you."
"Domino!"
"Oh, the deuce!"

BOOK II.

EPONINE.

CHAPTER I.

THE LARK'S FIELD.

MARIUS saw the unexpected ending of the plot upon whose track he had put Javert; but the inspector had no sooner left the house, taking his prisoners with him in three hackney coaches, than Marius slipped out of the house in his turn. It was only nine in the evening. Marius went to call on Courfeyrac, who was no longer the imperturbable inhabitant of the Latin Quarter. He had gone to live in the Rue de la Verrerie, "for political reasons;" this district was one of those in which insurrectionists of the day were fond of installing themselves. Marius said to Courfeyrac: "I am going to sleep here." Courfeyrac pulled a mattress off

his bed, which had two, spread it on the floor and said: "There you are!"

At seven o'clock the next morning, Marius returned to No. 50–52, paid his quarter's rent, and what he owed to Ma'am Bougon, had his books, bed, table, chest of drawers, and two chairs placed on a truck, and went away, without leaving his address, so that when Javert returned in the morning to question Marius about the events of the previous evening, he found only Ma'am Bougon, who replied: "Moved away!"

Ma'am Bougon was convinced that Marius was in some way an accomplice of the robbers arrested the night before. "Who would have thought it!" she exclaimed to the portresses of the quarter; "a young man like that, who looked almost like a girl!"

Marius had two reasons for moving thus promptly. The first was, that he now felt a horror of that house, where he had seen, so close at hand, and in all its most repulsive and ferocious development, a social ugliness more frightful still, perhaps, than the wicked rich man, — the wicked poor man. The second was, that he did not wish to figure at the trial, which would in all probability ensue, and to be obliged to give evidence against Thénardier. Javert supposed that the young man, whose name he had forgotten, was frightened and had run away, or else had not been at home at the appointed time. He made some efforts, however, to find him, which were unsuccessful. One month passed, then another. Marius was still living with Courfeyrac, and had learned from a young barrister, an habitual frequenter of the Courts, that Thénardier was in solitary confinement. Every Monday Marius left a five-franc piece for him at the wicket of La Force. Marius, having no money left, borrowed the five francs of Courfeyrac. It was the first time in his life that he had ever borrowed money. These periodical

five francs were a double enigma, — to Courfeyrac, who lent them, and to Thénardier, who received them. "To whom can they go?" thought Courfeyrac. "Where can they come from?" Thénardier asked himself.

Marius, however, was heart-broken. Everything had again vanished through a trap-door. He saw nothing ahead of him. His life was once more plunged in mystery, where he groped blindly. He had seen for a moment, and very closely, in that obscurity, the girl whom he loved, the old man who seemed to be her father,— those unknown beings who were his only interest and sole hope in this world; and at the very instant when he felt that he was about to grasp them, a puff of wind had swept away all these shadows. Not a spark of certainty and truth had flashed forth even in that most terrific collision, and no conjecture was possible. He no longer knew even the name of which he had felt so certain. It certainly was not Ursula, and "the Lark" was a nickname. Then, what was he to think of the old man? Was he really hiding from the police? The white-haired workman whom Marius had met in the vicinity of the Invalides reverted to his mind, and it now became probable that this workman and M. Leblanc were one and the same. He disguised himself, then? This man had his heroic side and his equivocal side. Why did he not call for help? Why did he fly? Was he, or was he not, the father of the girl? In short, was he really the man whom Thénardier fancied that he recognized? Thénardier might have been mistaken. These were all so many insoluble problems. All this, it is true, in no way lessened the angelic charm of the maiden of the Luxembourg, and hence arose his poignant distress. Marius had a passion in his heart, and night over his eyes. He was impelled, he was attracted, and he could not stir. All had vanished, except love; and

he had lost the sudden instincts and illuminations of even that love. Usually, this flame which burns us, also enlightens us a little, and casts some useful rays without. But Marius no longer even heard these mute counsels of passion. He never said to himself: "Suppose I were to go to such a place? What if I were to try this thing or that?" She whom he could no longer call Ursula was evidently somewhere; but nothing warned Marius in what direction he should seek her. His whole life was now summed up in two words,— absolute uncertainty in an impenetrable fog; and though he still longed to see her, he no longer hoped it.

To cap the climax, want returned. He felt its icy breath close upon him, behind him. Amid all these torments, and for a long time, he had discontinued his work, and nothing is more dangerous than to discontinue work. It is a habit which a man loses,— a habit easy to give up, but difficult to re-acquire.

A certain amount of revery is good, like a narcotic taken in discreet doses. It lulls to sleep the fevers of the labouring brain, which are sometimes severe, and produces in the mind a soft, fresh vapour which corrects the too sharp outlines of pure thought, fills up gaps and spaces here and there, binds them together, and rounds the angles of ideas. But excess of revery submerges and drowns. Woe to the brain worker who allows himself to fall wholly from thinking into revery! He thinks that he can easily rise again, and says that, after all, it is the same thing; but this is an error! Thought is the labour of the intellect, and revery its voluptuousness. To substitute revery for thought is like confounding poison with nutriment. Marius, it will be remembered, began with that. Passion supervened, and ended by hurling him into objectless and bottomless chimeras. In such a state a man only leaves his home

to go off and dream,— idle production, a tumultuous and stagnant gulf. In proportion as work diminishes, necessities increase. This is a law. Man, in a dreamy state, is naturally lavish and easily moved. The relaxed mind can no longer endure the contracted life.

There is, in this mode of existence, good mingled with evil; for if enervation be fatal, generosity is healthy and good. But the poor man who is generous and noble, and who does not work, is ruined. Resources are exhausted, and necessities arise. This is a fatal incline, on which the most honest and the strongest men are dragged down as well as the weakest and the most vicious, and which leads to one of two holes,— suicide or crime. By dint of going out to dream, a day comes when a man goes out to throw himself into the water.

Excess of dreaminess produces such men as Escousse and Libras.

Marius went down this incline slowly, with his eyes fixed upon her whom he no longer saw. What we have just written seems strange, and yet it is true; the recollection of an absent being is illumined in the gloom of the heart. The more it disappears, the more radiant it appears. The despairing and obscure soul sees this light on its horizon; the star of its inner night. She was Marius's entire thought; he dreamed of nothing else. He felt confusedly that his old coat was becoming an impossible coat, and that his new coat was growing an old coat; that his boots were wearing out; that his hat was wearing out; that his shirts were wearing out, — that is to say, that his life was wearing out; and he said to himself: "Could I but see her again before I die!"

One sweet idea alone was left him,— that She had loved him; that her glance had told him so; that she did not know his name, but that she knew his soul; and that, however mysterious the spot might be where she

now was, she loved him still. Might she not be dreaming of him as he was dreaming of her? Sometimes in those inexplicable hours which every loving heart knows, having only reason to be sad, and yet feeling within him a certain thrill of joy, he said to himself: "Her thoughts are visiting me;" and then added, "Perhaps my thoughts also go to her."

This illusion, at which he shook his head a moment later, still sufficed to cast rays which resembled hope into his soul at intervals. Now and then, especially at that evening hour which most saddens dreamers, he poured out upon virgin paper the purest, most impersonal, and most ideal reveries with which love filled his brain. He called this "writing to her."

We must not suppose, however, that his reason was disordered; quite the contrary. He had lost the faculty of working and of moving firmly toward a determinate object, but he had more clear-sightedness and rectitude than ever. Marius saw by a calm and real, though singular, light all that passed before him, even the most indifferent men and facts, and criticised everything correctly, with a sort of honest dejection and candid disinterestedness. His judgment, almost detached from hope, held aloof, and soared far above him.

In this state of mind nothing escaped him, nothing deceived him; and he discovered at every moment the bases of life, of humanity, and of destiny. Happy, even in agony, is the man to whom God has granted a soul worthy of love and misfortune! He who has not seen the things of this world and the heart of man in this double light, has seen nothing of the truth and knows nothing. The soul that loves and suffers is in a sublime state.

Days succeeded each other, and nothing new occurred. It merely seemed to him that the gloomy space which

he still had to traverse was growing shorter daily. He fancied that he could already see distinctly the brink of the bottomless abyss.

"What!" he repeated to himself, "shall I not see her again before then?"

If you go up the Rue St. Jacques, leaving the barrier on one side, and following the old inner boulevard for some distance, you reach the Rue de la Santé, then the Glacière; and just before coming to the small stream of the Gobelins, you see a sort of field, the only spot in the long and monotonous line of Parisian boulevards where Ruysdael would be tempted to sit down.

I know not whence the picturesque aspect is obtained, for you merely see a green field crossed by ropes, on which rags hang to dry; an old house built in the time of Louis XIII., with its high-pitched roof quaintly pierced with dormer windows; broken palisades; a little water between poplar-trees; women, laughter, and voices. On the horizon you see the Pantheon, the tree of the Deaf-mutes, the Val de Grâce, black, stunted, fantastic, amusing, and magnificent, and far in the background the stern, square crest of the towers of Notre-Dame. As the place is worth seeing, no one goes there. Scarce a cart or a wagoner passes in a quarter of an hour. It once happened that Marius's solitary rambles led him to this field, and on that day there was a rarity on the boulevard,—a passer-by. Marius, vaguely struck by the almost savage charm of the field, asked him, "What is the name of this spot?"

The passer-by answered: "It is the Lark's field;" and added: "It was here that Ulbach killed the shepherdess of Ivry."

But after the words "the Lark," Marius heard no more. In a dreamy condition, a word sometimes suffices to produce a congelation. The whole thought is suddenly

condensed round an idea, and is no longer capable of perceiving anything else. "The Lark," that was the name which had taken the place of Ursula in the depths of Marius's melancholy. "Stay!" he said, with that sort of unreasoning stupor peculiar to such mysterious asides, "this is her field; I shall learn here where she lives." This was absurd but irresistible, and he came daily to this field of the Lark.

CHAPTER II.

CRIMES IN EMBRYO, HATCHED IN PRISON.

JAVERT'S triumph at the Gorbeau House had seemed complete, but was not so.

In the first place, and that was his chief anxiety, Javert had not been able to make a prisoner of the prisoner. The assassinated man who escapes is more suspicious than the assassin; and it was probable that this man who escaped, such a precious capture for the bandits, might be equally so for the authorities.

And then, Montparnasse slipped out of Javert's clutches.

He must wait for another opportunity to lay hands on "that cursed little fop." Montparnasse, in fact, having met Eponine keeping watch on the boulevard, went off with her, preferring to play Nemorino with the daughter rather than Schinderhannes with the father. It was lucky for him that he did so, as he was now free. As for Eponine, Javert "nailed" her; but this was a poor consolation. He sent her to join Azelma at the Madelonnettes.

Lastly, on the way from No. 50–52 to La Force, one of the chief men arrested, Claquesous, had disappeared. No one knew how he did it; the sergeants and police agents "could not understand it." He had turned into vapour, slipped through the handcuffs, and trickled through a crack in the coach. All they knew was that when they reached the prison there was no Claquesous.

There was either some enchantment or some trick of the police about it. Had Claquesous melted away into darkness as a snow-flake does into water? Was there some unavowed connivance on the part of the police? Did this man belong to the double enigma of disorder and order? Was he concentric with infraction and repression? Had this Sphinx its fore-paws in crime and its hind-paws in the police? Javert did not accept these combinations, and would have rebelled against such compromises; but his squad contained other inspectors besides himself, and though his subordinates, perhaps they were more thoroughly initiated in the secrets of the prefecture, and Claquesous was such a villain that he might be a very excellent agent. To be on such intimate juggling terms with the night is a capital thing for rogues, and an admirable thing for the police. There are double-edged rogues of this sort. However this might be, Claquesous was lost, and could not be found; and Javert seemed more irritated than surprised. As for Marius, "that scrub of a barrister who was probably frightened," and whose name he had forgotten, Javert did not trouble himself much about him. Besides, a barrister can always be found. But was he only a barrister?

The examination began. The magistrate thought it advisable not to put one of the members of Patron-Minette in solitary confinement, as it was hoped he might chatter. This was Brujon, the hairy man of the Rue du Petit Banquier. He was turned into the Charlemagne Court, and the eyes of the spies were kept upon him. This name of Brujon is one of the recollections of La Force. In the hideous yard called "the yard of the New Building," — which the government named the Court of St. Bernard, and the thieves christened the Lion's den, — on the wall covered with scales and

leprosy, that rose on the left to the height of the roof, close to a rusty old iron gate which led to the old chapel of the ducal residence of La Force, now converted into a dormitory for prisoners, there might have been seen, twelve years ago, a sort of Bastille, clumsily etched on the stone with a nail, and beneath it this signature:

BRUJON, 1811.

The Brujon of 1811 was the father of the Brujon of 1832.

The latter, of whom we caught but a glimpse in the Gorbeau garret, was a very crafty and artful young fellow, with a bewildered and plaintive air. It was in consequence of this bewildered air that the magistrate turned him loose, believing him more useful in the Charlemagne yard than in a secret cell. Robbers do not interrupt their labours because they are in the hands of justice. They are not disturbed by such a trifle. To be in prison for one crime does not prevent a man from beginning on another. There are artists who have a picture in the Exhibition, but for all that work at a new one in their studio. Brujon seemed stupefied by prison. He would stand for hours at a time in the yard near the sutler's stall, gazing like an idiot at the dirty list of prices, which began with *garlic, sixty-two centimes,* and ended with *cigar, five centimes.* Or else he passed his time in trembling, chattering his teeth, declaring he had a fever, and inquiring whether one of the twenty-eight beds in the fever ward were vacant.

All at once, toward the end of February, 1832, it was discovered that Brujon, the sleepy-looking man, had had three different messages delivered, not in his own name, but in the name of three of his comrades, by the prison porters.

These messages had cost him fifty sous altogether, —

an exorbitant sum, which attracted the turnkey's attention. Inquiries were made, and after consulting the tariff of messages hung up in the prisoners' visiting-room, it was ascertained that the fifty sous were thus divided: one message to the Pantheon, ten sous; one to Val de Grâce, fifteen sous; and one to the Barrière de Grenelle, twenty-five sous, the latter being the dearest in the whole list. Now, at these very places resided three very dangerous prowlers at the barriers, Kruideniers, *alias* Bizarro, Glorious, an ex-convict, and Stop-the-coach, to whom the attention of the police was directed by this incident. It was assumed that these men belonged to Patron-Minette, two leaders of which band, Babet and Gueulemer, were locked up. It was supposed that Brujon's messages, which were not delivered at the houses, but to persons waiting in the street, contained information in regard to some crime premeditated. There was other evidence against them; the three ruffians were therefore arrested, and the police believed they had got scent of one of Brujon's machinations.

A week after these measures had been taken, a night-watchman, who was inspecting the lower dormitory in the New Building, was just placing his chestnut in the box (this was the method employed to make sure that the turnkeys did their duty punctually; every hour a chestnut must be dropped into all the boxes nailed to the doors of the dormitories), when he saw through the trap, Brujon sitting up in bed and writing something by the light from the hall. The turnkey went in; Brujon was placed in solitary confinement for a month, but what he had written could not be found. Hence the police were no wiser than before. One thing is certain, on the next day a "postilion" was thrown from the Charlemagne courtyard into the Lion's den, over the five-storied building that separated the two yards.

Prisoners give the name of " postilion " to an artistically moulded pellet of bread, which is sent into " Ireland, "— that is to say, thrown over the roofs of a prison, from one yard into another. (Etymology: " Over England, "— from one country into another,— " into Ireland. ") This ball falls into the yard; the man who picks it up opens it and finds in it a note addressed to some prisoner in the yard. If it be a prisoner who finds the note, he delivers it to the right address. If it be a turnkey, or one of those secretly bought prisoners, called " sheep " in prisons, and " foxes " at the galleys, the note is carried to the office and delivered to the police. This time the postilion reached its address, although the man for whom it was intended was at the time in solitary confinement. This person was no other than Babet, one of the four heads of Patron-Minette. It contained a roll of paper, on which these two lines only were written.

"Babet, there 's a job to be done in the Rue Plumet. A gate in a garden."

This was what Brujon had written the night before. In spite of male and female searchers, Babet contrived to send the note on from La Force to the Salpetrière to a " lady friend " of his locked up there. She in her turn handed the note to a girl she knew, one Magnon, whom the police were actively watching, but had not yet arrested. This Magnon, whose name the reader has already seen, was on intimate terms with the Thénardiers, as we shall show presently; and by going to see Eponine, she was able to serve as a bridge between the Salpetrière and the Madelonnettes. At this very moment, Eponine and Azelma were discharged for want of evidence; and when Eponine went out, Magnon, who was watching for her at the gate of the Madelonnettes, handed her Brujon's note to Babet, with instructions to look the matter

up. Eponine went to the Rue Plumet, recognized the gate and the garden, observed the house, watched for some days, and then carried to Magnon, who lived in the Rue Cloche-Perce, a biscuit, which the latter sent to Babet's mistress at the Salpetrière. A biscuit, in the shady symbolism of the prisons, means, " Nothing to be done. "

So that when, in less than a week from this, Babet and Brujon happened to meet, as one was going before the magistrate, the other returning: " Well, " asked Brujon, " the Rue P. ? " " Biscuit, " answered Babet. Thus the fœtus of crime engendered by Brujon at La Force miscarried. This miscarriage had consequences, for all that, perfectly foreign to Brujon's plans, as will be seen. Often when we think we are tying one thread, we are tying another.

CHAPTER III.

FATHER MABŒUF SEES AN APPARITION.

MARIUS no longer called on any one, but he sometimes met Father Mabœuf by chance. While Marius was slowly descending the mournful steps which may be called the cellar stairs, and which lead to places without light, where you hear the footsteps of the prosperous walking overhead, M. Mabœuf was also descending. The "Flora at Cauteretz" did not sell at all now, and the indigo experiments had not been successful in the little garden at Austerlitz, which was not well situated. M. Mabœuf could cultivate in it only such plants as love moisture and shade. For all that, though, he was not discouraged. He had obtained a strip of ground at the Jardin des Plantes, with a good aspect, on which to carry on his indigo experiments "at his own expense." To do this he pawned the plates of his "Flora," and he reduced his breakfast to two eggs, of which he left one for his old servant, whose wages he had not paid for fifteen months past. And very frequently his breakfast was his sole meal. He no longer laughed his childlike laugh; he had grown morose, and declined to receive visitors. Marius did well not to call on him. Sometimes when M. Mabœuf was on his way to the Jardin des Plantes, the old man and the young man passed each other on the Boulevard de l'Hôpital. They did not speak, and merely exchanged a melancholy nod. It

is a sad thing that a moment comes when misery parts friends!

Royol the publisher was dead. M. Mabœuf had nothing left but his books, his garden, and his indigo. These were the three shapes which happiness, pleasure, and hope had assumed for him. They were sufficient unto life. He said to himself: "When I have made my blue-balls, I shall be rich. I will redeem my plates from the Mont de Piété, bring my 'Flora' into fashion again with charlatanism, the big drum, and advertisements in the papers, and I will buy, I know where, a copy of Pierre de Medine's 'Art of Navigation,' with wood-cuts, edition 1539." Meantime, he toiled all day at his indigo-patch, and at night went home to water his garden and to read his books. M. Mabœuf at this time was close on eighty years of age.

One evening he had a strange apparition. He had returned home while it was still daylight, and found that Mother Plutarch, whose health was not so good as it might be, was ill, and had gone to bed. He dined upon a bone on which a little meat remained, and a piece of bread which he found on the kitchen-table, and was seated on an overturned stone post which served as a bench in his garden. Near this bench there was, after the fashion of old kitchen-gardens, a sort of tall chest of beams and planks, in a very rickety condition, a rabbit hutch on the ground-floor and a store-room above. There were no rabbits in the hutch, but there were a few apples, the remnant of the winter stock, in the store-room.

M. Mabœuf was reading, with the help of his spectacles, two books in which he took great interest, and which, a grave matter at his age, absorbed him. His natural timidity rendered him prone to accept superstitions. The first of these books was the celebrated trea-

tise of President Delancre, "On the Inconstancy of Demons," and the other was the quarto work of Mutor de la Rubaudière, "On the Demons of Vauvert and the Goblins of La Bièvre." The latter book interested him the more, because his garden had in olden times been one of the places haunted by the goblins. Twilight was beginning to whiten what was above and blacken what was below. As he read, M. Mabœuf looked over the book which he held in his hand, at his plants, and among others at a magnificent rhododendron, which was one of his consolations. Four scorching days of wind and sun had passed without a drop of rain; the stems were bending, the buds drooping, the leaves falling. They all required watering; the rhododendron especially was in a very sad way. M. Mabœuf was one of those men for whom plants have souls. He had been at work all day in his indigo-patch, and was worn out with fatigue; but for all that he rose, laid his books on the bench, and walked in a bent posture and with tottering steps to the well. But when he seized the chain he had not sufficient strength to unhook it. He then turned and cast a glance of agony at the sky, which was glittering with stars.

The evening had that serenity which crushes human sorrow beneath an indescribably mournful and eternal joy. The night promised to be as dry as the day had been.

"Stars everywhere!" the old man thought. "Not the smallest cloud! Not a drop of water!"

And his head, which had been raised a moment before, again fell on his breast. He raised it, and looked once more at the sky, murmuring:—

"A little dew! A little pity!"

He tried once again to unhook the well-chain, but could not. At that moment he heard a voice saying:

Father Mabœuf has an Apparition.

Photogravure from Painting by Jeanniot.

"Father Mabœuf, shall I water the garden for you?"

At the same time a sound like that of a wild beast breaking through was heard in the hedge, and he saw a tall thin girl emerge from the shrubbery, and stand before him, staring at him boldly. She looked less like a human being than some form just blossomed forth from the twilight. Before Father Mabœuf, who easily took alarm, and who, as we said, was a trifle terrified, could answer a syllable, this creature, whose movements had a sort of strange abruptness in the gloom, had unhooked the chain, let down and drawn up the bucket, and filled the watering-pot; and the old gentleman saw this apparition, which was barefooted and wore a ragged skirt, running about among the flower-beds and distributing life around her. The sound of the water pattering on the leaves filled M. Mabœuf's soul with ecstasy. The rhododendron now seemed to him to be happy.

The first bucket emptied, the girl drew a second, then a third, and watered the whole garden.

As she moved about the walks, where her outline appeared quite black, and as she waved her long thin arms and her ragged shawl, she bore a striking resemblance to a bat. When she had finished, Father Mabœuf went up to her with tears in his eyes, and laid his hand on her head.

"God will bless you," he said; "you are an angel, since you take care of flowers."

"No," she replied, "I am the devil; but I don't care."

The old man continued, without waiting for or hearing her reply.

"What a pity that I am so unhappy and so poor, and can do nothing for you!"

"You can do something," she said.

"What?"

"Tell me where Monsieur Marius lives."

The old man did not understand.

"What Monsieur Marius?"

He raised his glassy eyes and seemed seeking something which had vanished.

"A young man who used to come here."

Meantime M. Mabœuf had searched his memory.

"Oh, yes!" he exclaimed; "I know whom you mean. Wait a minute. Monsieur Marius,— Baron Marius Pontmercy, to be sure! He lives, or rather he does not live — Well, I do not know."

As he spoke, he stooped to straighten a rhododendron branch, and continued:—

"Oh, yes, I remember now. He very often passes along the boulevard, and goes in the direction of the Lark's field in the Rue Croule Barbe. Look for him there. He will not be hard to find."

When M. Mabœuf raised his head again, he was alone; the girl had disappeared. He was decidedly frightened.

"Really," he thought, "if my garden were not watered, I should fancy that it was a ghost."

An hour after, when he was in bed, this idea returned to him; and as he fell asleep, at that troubled moment when thought gradually assumes the form of dream in order to traverse sleep, like the fabulous bird which changes itself into a fish to cross the sea, he said to himself in a confused way:—

"Really, now, this affair greatly resembles what La Rubaudière relates of the goblins. Could it have been a goblin?"

CHAPTER IV.

MARIUS SEES AN APPARITION.

A FEW days after this ghostly visit to Father Mabœuf, one morning,—it was on a Monday, the day of the five-franc piece which Marius borrowed of Courfeyrac for Thénardier,—Marius placed this coin in his pocket, and before carrying it to the prison, resolved to "take a little walk," hoping that on his return this would make him work. It was, however, everlastingly thus. As soon as he rose, he sat down before a book and a sheet of paper to scratch off some translation. His task at this time was to translate into French a celebrated German quarrel,—the controversy between Gans and Savigny. He took up Gans, he took up Savigny, read four lines, tried to write one, but could not, saw a star between his paper and himself, and got up from his chair, saying: "I will go out; that will put me in the humour."

And he proceeded to the Lark's field. There he saw the star more than ever, and Gans and Savigny less than ever. He went home, tried to resume his task, and did not succeed. He could not join a single one of the threads which were broken in his brain. So he said to himself, "I will not go out to-morrow. It prevents me from working." But he went out every day.

He lived in the Lark's field rather than in Courfeyrac's lodging. His true address was Boulevard de la Santé, at the seventh tree beyond the Rue Croule Barbe.

That morning he had left the seventh tree, and was seated on the parapet of the bridge over the little stream. The merry sunbeams flashed through the freshly unfolded and luminous leaves. He was thinking of "her." And his revery, becoming a reproach, fell back on himself. He thought bitterly of the indolence and mental paralysis which were gaining on him, and of the night which constantly grew denser before him, so that he could no longer even see the sun. Still, through this painful disentangling of indistinct ideas which was not even a soliloquy, so weak was action in him that he had no longer the strength to wish to feel sad, — through this melancholy absorption, we say, sensations from without reached him. He heard behind him, on both sides of the river, the washerwomen of the Gobelins beating their linen, and above his head the birds twittering and singing in the elms, — on one side the sound of liberty, happy carelessness, and winged leisure; on the other, the sound of labour. These two joyous sounds made him think deeply, and almost reflect.

All at once, amid his moody trance, he heard a familiar voice say: —

"Hullo! Here he is!"

He raised his eyes and recognized that wretched girl who had come to him one morning, — Eponine, the elder of Thénardier's daughters. He knew her name now. Strange to say, she had grown poorer and more beautiful, — two things which he had not thought possible. She had accomplished a double progress, toward the light and toward distress. Her feet were bare and her clothes torn, as on the day when she so boldly entered his room; but the rags were two months older, the holes were larger, and the rags more filthy. She had the same hoarse voice, the same forehead, wrinkled and bronzed by exposure, the same free, uncertain, and wandering

look. She had, besides, on her countenance that peculiarly startled and lamentable air which a sojourn in prison adds to misery. She had pieces of straw and hay in her hair,— not that, like Ophelia, she had gone mad through contagion with Hamlet's lunacy, but because she had slept in some stable-loft. With all that, she was beautiful. O youth, what a star art thou! She stood before Marius with a faint joy on her livid face, and something like a smile. It was some moments before she could speak.

"So I have found you!" she said at last. "Father Mabœuf was right; it was on this boulevard! How I have sought you! If you only knew! Did you know it? I have been in quod. For a fortnight! They let me go because there was no charge against me; and, besides, I had not attained years of discretion, not by two months. Oh, how I have looked for you! For the last six weeks! So you no longer live down there?"

"No," said Marius.

"Ah, I understand. On account of that thing. Well, such disturbances are unpleasant. You have moved. Hullo! why do you wear an old hat like that? A young man like you ought to be handsomely dressed. Do you know, Monsieur Marius, that Father Mabœuf calls you Baron Marius — I forget what; but you are not a baron, are you? Barons are old swells, who walk in front of the Luxembourg palace, where there is the most sun, and read the 'Quotidienne' for a sou. I carried a letter once to a baron who was like that. He was more than a hundred years old. I say, where do you live now?"

Marius did not answer.

"Ah," she added, "you have a hole in your shirt-front. I must mend it for you."

Then she continued, with an expression which gradually clouded:—

"You do not seem pleased to see me."

Marius held his tongue. She was also silent for a moment, and then exclaimed:—

"But if I liked, I could make you look pleased."

"What do you mean?" asked Marius.

She bit her lip; she seemed to hesitate, as if a prey to some inward conflict. At length she seemed to make up her mind.

"So much the worse; but no matter. You look sad, and I want you to be pleased. Only promise me, though, that you will smile; for I want to see you smile and hear you say: 'Ah! well, that is good!' Poor M. Marius! you know you promised you would give me whatever I wanted."

"Yes; but speak, can't you?"

She looked Marius straight in the eye, and said: "I have the address."

Marius turned pale. All his blood flowed back to his heart. "What address?"

"The address for which you asked me." She added, as if with a great effort: "The address,—you know?"

"Yes!" stammered Marius.

"The young lady's!"

These words uttered, she heaved a deep sigh.

Marius leaped from the parapet on which he was sitting and wildly seized her hand.

"Oh! Well, take me there! Tell me! Ask of me what you please! Where is it?"

"Come with me," she answered; "I don't exactly know the street or the number. It is quite on the other side of town, but I know the house well; I will take you to it."

She withdrew her hand, and continued in a tone which would have made an observer's heart bleed, but did not at all affect the intoxicated and transported lover:—

Marius has an Apparition.

Etched by W. H. W. Bicknell. — Painted by Jeanniot.

"Oh, how pleased you are!"

A cloud passed over Marius's face, and he clutched Eponine's arm.

"Swear one thing."

"Swear?" she said. "What do you mean by that? What! would you have me swear?" And she laughed.

"Your father! Promise me, Eponine, swear to me that you will never give your father that address!"

She turned to him with a stupefied air. "Eponine! How do you know that my name is Eponine?"

"Promise me what I ask you."

But she did not seem to hear him.

"That is nice! You called me Eponine!"

Marius seized her by both her arms.

"Answer me, in Heaven's name! Pay attention to what I am saying. Swear to me that you will not give your father the address which you know."

"My father?" said she. "Oh, yes, my father! Never fear. He 's all right, in solitary confinement. Besides, what do I care for my father!"

"But you have not promised!" exclaimed Marius.

"Let me go!" she said, bursting into a laugh. "How you shake me! Yes, yes, I promise! I swear! What do I care? I will not give my father the address. There! does that suit you? Is that it?"

"Nor any one else?" said Marius.

"Nor any one else."

"Now," Marius continued, "take me there."

"At once?"

"At once."

"Come on! Oh, how glad he is!" she said.

A few yards farther on she stopped.

"You follow me too closely, M. Marius. Let me go on in front, and do you follow me without seeming to do so. A respectable young man like you must not be seen with a woman like me."

No tongue could render all that was contained in that word "woman," thus pronounced by that child.

She went a dozen paces and again stopped. Marius rejoined her, and she said to him aside, without turning to him:—

"By the bye, you know that you promised me something?"

Marius felt in his pocket. He had nothing in the world but the five-franc piece destined for Father Thénardier. He took it and laid it in Eponine's hand. She opened her fingers and let the coin slip to the ground, and, looking at him frowningly, said:—

"I do not want your money."

BOOK III.

THE HOUSE IN THE RUE PLUMET.

CHAPTER I.

THE MYSTERIOUS HOUSE.

ABOUT the middle of the last century, a judge of the parliament of Paris, who kept a mistress under the rose (for at that day the nobility displayed their mistresses, and the common people concealed theirs), had a "small house" built in the Faubourg St. Germain, in the deserted Rue de Blomet, which is now called Rue Plumet, not far from the spot formerly known as the "Combat des Animaux." This house consisted of a pavilion only one story in height, — two rooms on the ground-floor, two bedchambers on the first, a kitchen below, a boudoir above, a garret beneath the roof, and the whole was surrounded by a garden, with a big gate opening on the street. This was

all that passers-by could see. But behind the pavilion was a narrow yard, and at the end of the yard, an outhouse, consisting of two rooms and a cellar, where a nurse and a child could be concealed if necessary. In the back of this outhouse was a secret door leading into a long, narrow, paved, winding passage, open to the sky, and shut in by two lofty walls. This passage, concealed with prodigious art, and, as it were, lost between garden walls and cultivated land, whose every turn and winding it followed, led to another secret door, which opened about a quarter of a mile off, almost in another quarter, at the solitary end of the Rue de Babylone. The judge went in by this door, so that even those who might have watched him, and have observed that he went somewhere every day, in a mysterious way, would never have suspected that to go to the Rue de Babylone was to go to the Rue Blomet. By clever purchases of ground, the ingenious magistrate had been enabled to make this hidden road upon his own land, and consequently uncontrolled. At a later date he sold the land bordering on the passage, in small lots for gardens; and the owners of these gardens on either side supposed that they saw a party-wall, and did not even suspect the existence of this long strip of pavement winding between two walls among their flower-beds and orchards. The birds alone saw this curiosity. It is probable that the linnets and tomtits of the last century gossiped a great deal about the judge.

The pavilion, built of stone, in the Mansard style, and panelled and furnished in the Watteau style, rock-work outside, periwig within, and begirt by a triple hedge of flowers, had something discreet, coquettish, and solemn about it, befitting a caprice of love and the magistracy.

This house and this passage, which have now disappeared, still existed fifteen years ago. In '93 a brazier bought the house for the purpose of demolishing it, but

as he could not pay, the nation declared him bankrupt; and thus it was the house that demolished the brazier. Since then the house had remained uninhabited, and fell slowly into ruins, like every residence to which the presence of man no longer communicates life. The old furniture was left in it, and such few persons as passed along the Rue Plumet were informed that it was for sale or to let, by a yellow and illegible placard, which had been fastened to the garden gate ever since 1810.

Toward the end of the Restoration the same passers-by might have noticed that the bill had disappeared, and even that the first-floor shutters were open. The house was really occupied; and there were short curtains at the windows, — a sign that there was a woman in the house.

In October, 1829, a middle-aged man presented himself and took the house as it stood, including, of course, the outhouse and the passage leading to Rue de Babylone. He had the two secret doors of this passage put in repair. The house was still furnished much as the judge had left it; the new tenant merely ordered a few necessary articles, had the paving-stones in the yard put to rights, new stairs put in, and the windows mended, and eventually installed himself there with a young girl and an old woman, without any disturbance, and rather like a man stealing in than one entering his own house. The neighbours, however, did not chatter, for the simple reason that there were none.

This unobtrusive tenant was Jean Valjean, and the girl was Cosette. The domestic was a woman named Toussaint, whom Jean Valjean had saved from the hospital and from wretchedness, and who was old, countrified, and a stammerer, — three qualities which had decided Jean Valjean to take her with him. He hired the house in the name of M. Fauchelevent, independent gentleman. In all we have recently recorded, the reader has, doubtless,

recognized Jean Valjean even sooner than Thénardier did.

Why had he left the convent of the Little Picpus, and what had happened?

Nothing had happened.

It will be borne in mind that Jean Valjean was happy in the convent, — so happy that his conscience at last became alarmed. He saw Cosette daily; he felt paternity spring up and develop in him more and more; he set his whole soul on the girl; he said to himself that she was his, that no power on earth could rob him of her, that it would be so indefinitely, that she would certainly become a nun, as she was daily gently urged to it, that henceforth the convent was the whole world for her as for him, that he would grow old there and she grow up, that she would grow old and he die there; and that, finally, — enchanting prospect! — no separation was possible. As he reflected on this, he fell into perplexities. He asked himself if all this happiness were really his, if it were not composed of the happiness of another, — of the happiness of this child, which he, an old man, was confiscating and depriving her of; whether this were not robbery? He said to himself that this child had a right to know life before she renounced it; that to deprive her in advance, and without consulting her, of all joys, under the pretext of saving her from all trials, to profit by her ignorance and isolation to create an artificial vocation in her, was to distort the nature of a human creature, and to lie to God. And who knew whether Cosette, some day becoming aware of all this, and finding herself a nun, to her sorrow, might not come to hate him? It was a last thought, almost selfish, and less heroic than the others, but it was intolerable to him. He resolved to leave the convent.

He resolved to do so, and recognized with a breaking heart that he must do so. As for objections, there were

none. Five years' residence between those four walls, and of disappearance, had necessarily destroyed or dispersed the elements of fear. He could return to human society at his ease; for he had grown old, and all had changed. Who would recognize him now? And then, looking at the worst, there was danger only for himself, and he had no right to condemn Cosette to a cloister, for the reason that he had been condemned to the galleys; besides, what is danger in comparison with duty? Lastly, nothing prevented him from being prudent and taking precautions.

As for Cosette's education, it was almost finished and complete. His resolution once formed, he awaited an opportunity, which soon offered. Old Fauchelevent died.

Jean Valjean requested an audience of the reverend prioress, and told her that as he had inherited a small property by his brother's death, which would enable him to live without working, he should leave the service of the convent and take his daughter with him; but as it was not fair that Cosette, as she had not taken the vows, should have been educated gratuitously, he humbly begged the reverend prioress to allow him to offer the community, in payment for the five years which Cosette had passed among them, the sum of five thousand francs.

It was thus that Jean Valjean quitted the convent of the Perpetual Adoration.

On leaving it, he carried with his own hands, and would not intrust to any porter, the small valise, of which he always had the key about him. This valise perplexed Cosette, owing to the aromatic smell which issued from it. Let us say at once that this valise never quitted him again; he always had it in his bedroom. It was the first, and sometimes the only thing which he carried away in his removals. Cosette laughed, called this valise "the inseparable," and said, "I am jealous of it."

Jean Valjean, however, felt a profound anxiety when he returned to the outer air.

He discovered the house in the Rue Plumet, and hid himself in it, henceforth remaining in possession of the name of Ultimus Fauchelevent. At the same time he hired two other lodgings in Paris, so that he might attract less attention than if he remained always in the same quarter; that he might, if necessary, absent himself for a while if anything alarmed him; and, lastly, that he might not be caught unprovided, as on the night when he so miraculously escaped from Javert. These two lodgings were of a very mean appearance, and in two quarters quite remote from each other, — one being in the Rue de l'Ouest, and the other in the Rue de l'Homme-armé. He spent a few weeks now and then at one or the other of these lodgings, taking Cosette with him, and leaving Toussaint behind. He was waited on by the porter, and represented himself as a person living in the country, who had a lodging in town. This virtuous man had three domiciles in Paris in order to escape the police.

CHAPTER II.

JEAN VALJEAN A NATIONAL GUARD.

PROPERLY speaking, however, he lived in the Rue Plumet, and he had arranged his existence there in the following fashion: —

Cosette and the servant occupied the pavilion. Cosette had the best bedroom, with the painted pier-glasses, the boudoir with the gilt mouldings, the judge's drawing-room with its hangings and vast easy-chairs; she had the garden. Jean Valjean placed in Cosette's room a bed with a canopy of ancient damask in three colours, and a beautiful old Persian rug, purchased at Mother Gauchér's in the Rue Figuier St. Paul, while, to correct the sternness of these antique splendours, he added all the light, graceful furniture suited to a young girl, — a what-not, book-shelves with gilt-edged books, a desk and blotting-case, a work-table inlaid with mother-of-pearl, a silver gilt dressing-case, and toilet articles of Japanese china. Long damask curtains of three colours, like those on the bed, hung at the first-floor windows, while on the ground-floor they were of tapestry. All through the winter, Cosette's small house was warmed from top to bottom, while Valjean himself lived in the sort of porter's lodge at the end of the backyard, which was furnished with a mattress and a truckle bed, a deal table, two straw-bottomed chairs, an earthenware water-jug, a few books on a shelf, and his dear valise in a corner; he never had any fire. He dined with Cosette, and black bread was put on

the table for him. He said to Toussaint when she came: "This young lady is mistress of the house." "And you, sir?" Toussaint replied, quite amazed. "Oh! I am much better than the master; I am the father."

Cosette had been taught housekeeping in the convent, and she kept the accounts, which were very small. Daily, Jean Valjean took Cosette for a walk, leading her to the most sequestered paths of the Luxembourg; and every Sunday they attended Mass at the church of St. Jacques du Haut-pas, because it was a long distance off. As it is a very poor district, he gave away a considerable amount of alms, and the poor flocked around him in the church, which had brought down upon him Thénardier's letter: "To the benevolent gentleman of the church of St. Jacques du Haut-pas." He was fond of taking Cosette to visit the needy and the sick, but no stranger ever entered the house in the Rue Plumet. Toussaint bought the provisions and Jean Valjean himself fetched the water from a fountain close by, on the boulevard. The wood and wine were kept in a semi-subterranean building lined with rock-work, near the door in the Rue Babylone, and which had formerly served the judge as a grotto; for in the age of the "Follies" and "Little Houses," there was no love without a grotto.

In the door opening on the Rue Babylone there was a letter-box; but as the inhabitants of the house in the Rue Plumet received no letters, this box, once on a time the go-between in a love affair, and the confidant of a foppish lawyer, now served only to receive the tax-papers and the guard-summons; for M. Fauchelevent, gentleman of means, belonged to the National Guard. He had been unable to escape the close meshes of the census of 1831. The municipal inquiries made at that period extended even to the convent of the Little Picpus, a sort of impenetrable and holy cloud, whence Jean Valjean emerged

venerable in the sight of the mayor, and consequently worthy of mounting guard.

Three or four times a year Jean Valjean donned his uniform and went on duty; he did so readily enough, for it was a disguise which enabled him to mix with everybody, while himself remaining solitary. Jean Valjean had attained his sixtieth year, the age of legal exemption, but he did not look more than fifty; besides, he had no wish to escape his sergeant-major or to cheat Count Lobau. He had no civil status, he hid his name, his identity, his age, — everything; and, as we just said, he was a willing National Guard; his whole ambition was to resemble any other man who paid taxes. The ideal of this man was inwardly an angel, outwardly an ordinary citizen.

Let us mention one fact, by the way. When Jean Valjean went out with Cosette he dressed as we have seen, and looked like a retired officer; but when he went out alone, which was usually at night, he wore a workman's jacket and trousers, and a cap which hid his face. Was this precaution or humility? Both. Cosette was accustomed to the enigmatical side of her destiny, and hardly noticed her father's singularities. As for Toussaint, she revered Jean Valjean and considered everything he did right.

One day her butcher, who got a glimpse of her master, said: "He's a queer-looking stick;" and she replied: "He's a–a–a saint." None of the three ever left the house except by the gate in the Rue de Babylone; and unless they were seen through the garden gate it would have been difficult to guess that they lived in the Rue Plumet. This gate was always locked, and Jean Valjean left the garden untended that he might not attract attention.

In this, perhaps, he made a mistake.

CHAPTER III.

FOLIIS AC FRONDIBUS.

THIS garden, thus left to itself for more than half a century, had become something extraordinary and charming. Passers-by forty years ago stopped in the street to gaze at it, without suspecting the secrets which it hid behind its fresh green depths. More than one dreamer of that day allowed his eyes and thoughts indiscreetly to penetrate between the bars of the ancient, padlocked gate, twisted and shaky, hanging to two green moss-covered pillars, and quaintly surmounted by a pediment covered with undecipherable arabesques.

There was a stone bench in one corner, there were one or two mouldering statues, and some trellises, falling apart with age, rotted against the wall; there were no turf and no walks, but there was plenty of couch-grass. The artificiality of gardening had gone, and Nature had returned. Weeds were abundant, and the festival of the gillyflowers was splendid. Nothing in this garden obstructed the sacred effort of things toward life; venerable growth was at home there and held high holiday. The trees had bent down to the briers, the briers had mounted toward the trees; the plants had clambered up, the branches had bent down. The things that crawl on the ground had gone in search of the things that bloom in the air, and the things that float in the wind stooped down to those that trail in the moss; brambles, branches, leaves, fibres, tufts, twigs, tendrils, and thorns were inter-

mingled, tangled, wedded, and confounded. Vegetation had celebrated and accomplished here, in a close and profound embrace, and beneath the well-pleased eye of the Creator, in that enclosure three hundred feet square, the holy mystery of its fraternity, which is a symbol of human fraternity. This garden was no longer a garden, but a vast thicket, — that is to say, something as impenetrable as a forest, as populous as a city, as rustling as a nest, as dark as a cathedral, as fragrant as a bouquet, as solitary as a tomb, and as lively as a crowd.

In spring this great thicket, free behind its gate and within its four walls, played its part in the secret task of universal germination, and quivered in the rising sun almost like the animal that drinks in the breath of cosmic love, and feels the sap of April ascending and boiling in its veins. Shaking in the wind its thick green locks, it scattered over the damp ground, the weather-beaten statues, the crumbling steps of the pavilion, and even over the pavement of the deserted street, constellations of flowers, pearls of dew, fecundity, beauty, life, joy, and perfumes. At midday thousands of white butterflies took refuge there; and it was a divine sight to watch that living summer snow whirling in flakes amid the shadows. In the pleasant gloom of the foliage a multitude of innocent voices spoke sweetly to the soul, and what the twittering forgot to say the buzzing completed. At night a dreamy vapour rose from the garden and enveloped it; a cerecloth of mist, a celestial and calm melancholy, brooded over it; the intoxicating smell of honeysuckle and bindweed ascended from every side like an exquisite and subtle poison; the last appeals of the woodpeckers and the goldfinches were heard as they dozed in the branches. The sacred intimacy between the birds and the trees was felt; by day the wings gladden the leaves, and at night the leaves protect the wings.

In winter the thicket was blank, dank, bristling, and shivering, and allowed a glimpse of the house. Instead of flowers among the branches and dew upon the flowers, the long silvery trail of the snails could be seen on the cold, thick carpet of yellow leaves; but in any case, under any aspect, and at all seasons, — spring, summer, autumn, and winter, — this little enclosure exhaled melancholy, contemplation, solitude, liberty, the absence of man and the presence of God; and the rusty old gates seemed to say, "This garden is mine."

In vain the pavements of Paris were all around, the classic and splendid mansions of the Rue de Varennes two yards off, the dome of the Invalides close by, and the Chamber of Deputies no great distance; in vain the carriages from the Rues de Bourgogne and St. Dominique rolled luxuriously along in the vicinity, and yellow, brown, white, and red omnibuses crossed each other's course in the adjoining square; the Rue Plumet was a desert; and the death of the old proprietors, the revolution which had passed over it, the overthrow of ancient fortunes, absence, forgetfulness, and forty years of desertion and widowhood had sufficed to restore to this privileged spot ferns, mulleins, hemlock, ragwort, tall weeds, great plants with broad leaves of pale green, lizards, beetles, and restless and rapid insects, to bring forth from the depths of the earth and to cause the reappearance between these four walls of a certain wild and savage grandeur; and Nature, which disconcerts all the paltry arrangements of man, and shows herself as fully in the ant as in the eagle, blossomed forth in a poor little Parisian garden with as much rude strength and majesty as in a virgin forest of the New World.

Nothing, in fact, is small; and any one who feels the profound and penetrating influence of Nature knows this. Although no absolute satisfaction is granted to philosophy, and though it can no more circumscribe the cause

than limit the effect, the contemplator falls into unfathomable ecstasy when he watches all those decompositions of forces which result in unity. Everything labours for everything else.

Algebra is applied to the clouds; the radiation of the star benefits the rose; no thinker would dare to say that the perfume of the hawthorn is useless to the constellations. Who can calculate the cause of a molecule? Who among us knows whether the creation of worlds be not determined by the fall of grains of sand? Who is acquainted with the reciprocal ebb and flow of the infinitely great and the infinitely little, the reverberation of causes from the precipices of being, and the avalanches of creation? The smallest worm is of importance; the little is great and the great little; all is in a state of equilibrium in necessity. This is a terrific vision for the mind. There are miraculous relations between beings and things. In that inexhaustible whole, from the flea to the sun, nothing despises the other; all have need of each other. Light does not bear terrestrial perfumes into azure depths, without a reason; night distributes the stellar essence to the sleeping flowers. Every bird that flies has round its claw the thread of infinity. Germination is equally displayed in the outburst of a meteor and the peck of the swallow breaking its egg; and it places the birth of a worm and the advent of Socrates on the same plane. Where the telescope ends, the microscope begins. Which of the two has the broader field of vision? Choose. A patch of green mould is a pleiad of flowers; a nebula is an ant-hill of stars. There is the same and even more extraordinary promiscuity between things of the intellect and facts of substance. Elements and principles are mingled, combined, wedded together, and multiply each other, till they lead both the moral and the material world into the same light. The phenomenon is perpetually

reverting to itself. In the vast cosmic exchanges universal life comes and goes in unknown quantities, rolling everything in the invisible mystery of effluvia, employing everything, — losing not a single dream, not a single sleep, sowing an animalcule here, crumbling a star there, oscillating and winding, making of light a force and of thought an element, disseminated and invisible, dissolving everything save that geometrical point the I; bringing back everything to the soul-atom, expanding everything in God; entangling all activities, from the highest to the lowest, in the obscurity of a vertiginous mechanism; attaching the flight of an insect to the movement of the earth, and subordinating, perhaps, if only through the identity of the law, the evolution of the comet in the firmament to the rotatory movement of the infusoria in the drop of water, — machine made of mind; an enormous machinery of cog-wheels, whose prime motor is the gnat, and whose last wheel is the Zodiac.

CHAPTER IV.

A CHANGE OF BARS.

IT seemed as if this garden, created in former times to conceal wanton mysteries, had been transformed and become fitted to shelter chaste mysteries. There were no longer any arbours, bowling-greens, covered walks, or grottos; there was a magnificent tangled obscurity, which fell like a veil over all. Paphos was changed into Eden. Some feeling of repentance had refreshed this retreat. The coquettish garden, once so compromised, had returned to virginity and modesty. A judge, assisted by a gardener, a worthy fellow who thought himself the successor of Lamoignon, and another worthy fellow who fancied himself the successor of Lenôtre, had turned it about, clipped it, decked it, adorned it, and moulded it to purposes of gallantry; Nature had seized it again, filled it with shadows, and prepared it for love.

There was, too, in this solitude, a heart which was quite ready. Love had only to show itself; for there was here a temple composed of verdure, grass, moss, the sighs of birds, gentle shadows, waving branches, and a soul formed of gentleness, faith, candour, hope, aspiration, and illusion.

Cosette had left the convent while still almost a child. She was but little more than fourteen, and at the "ungrateful age;" as we have said, with the exception of her eyes, she was plain rather than pretty. She had no un-

graceful feature, but she was awkward, thin, timid and bold at the same time, — in short, a grown-up little girl. Her education was finished, — that is to say, she had been taught religion, and more especially devotion, also "history" (that is to say, the thing so called in a convent), geography, grammar, the participles, the kings of France, a little music, drawing, etc.; but in other respects she was utterly ignorant, which is at once a charm and a peril. The mind of a young girl should not be left in darkness; for later on, mirages too sudden and too lively are produced in it as in a camera obscura. She should be gently and discreetly enlightened, rather by the reflection of realities than by their direct and harsh light; for this is a useful and gracefully austere half-light, which dissipates childish fears and prevents falls. Only the maternal instinct, that admirable intuition into which the recollections of the virgin and the experience of the wife enter, knows how or of what this half-light should be composed.

Nothing can take the place of that instinct; and in forming a girl's mind, all the nuns in the world are not equal to one mother.

Cosette had had no mother; she had only had a great many mothers.

As for Jean Valjean, he was indeed all tenderness and all solicitude; but he was only an old man who knew nothing at all.

Now, in this work of education, in this serious matter of preparing a woman for life, what knowledge is needed to contend against the great ignorance which is called innocence!

Nothing prepares a girl for passions like the convent, for it directs her thoughts to the unknown. The heart, driven back on itself, works downward, since it cannot pour itself out, and grows deeper, since it cannot expand. Hence come visions, suppositions, conjectures, romances

sketched, adventures longed for, fantastic constructions, edifices built entirely in the inner darkness of the mind, sombre and secret abodes in which the passions find a lodging so soon as the convent gate is opened to admit them. The convent is a compression which must last throughout life if it is to triumph over the human heart.

On leaving the convent, Cosette could not have found anything sweeter or more dangerous than the house in the Rue Plumet. It was the continuation of solitude, with the beginning of liberty, — a closed garden, but a rich, sharp, voluptuous, and fragrant Nature. There were the same dreams as in the convent, but there were glimpses of young men; the gate had bars, but it looked on the street.

Still, we repeat, when Cosette first came there, she was but a child. Jean Valjean gave over to her that uncultivated garden, and said to her: "Do what you like with it." This amused Cosette; she turned over all the tufts and all the stones; she searched for "beasts." She played about while awaiting the time to dream; she loved this garden for the sake of the insects which she found under her feet in the grass, while awaiting the time when she should love it for the sake of the stars that she could see through the branches above her head.

And then, too, she loved her father,— that is to say, Jean Valjean, — with all her soul, with a simple, filial passion, which made the worthy man a desired and delightful companion to her. Our readers will remember that M. Madeleine was fond of reading; Jean Valjean continued the practice. He had learned the art of talking; and he possessed the secret wealth and eloquence of a humble, true, and self-cultivated intellect. He had retained just sufficient crudeness to season his kindness; his mind was a rough mind, and his heart was soft. During their talks in the Luxembourg garden, he gave Cosette long ex-

planations about all sorts of things, deriving his information from what he had read, and also from what he had suffered. While Cosette listened, her eyes wandered vaguely around.

This simple man sufficed for Cosette's thoughts just as the wild garden sufficed for her eyes. When she had chased the butterflies for a while, she would run up to him panting, and say: "Oh, how tired I am!" and he would kiss her forehead. Cosette adored this good man, and she was ever at his heels. Where Jean Valjean was, there happiness was. As he lived neither in the pavilion nor the garden, she was more attached to the paved back-yard than to the flower-laden garden, and preferred the little lodge with the straw chairs to the large drawing-room hung with tapestry, which was furnished with silk-covered chairs. Jean Valjean sometimes said to her with the smile of a man who is delighted to be importuned: "Come, go to your own rooms! Leave me in peace for a little while."

She scolded him in that charming, tender way which is so graceful when addressed by a daughter to a parent.

"Father, I feel very cold in your room; why don't you have a carpet and a stove?"

"My dear child, there are so many persons more deserving than myself, who have not even a roof over their heads."

"Then, why is there a fire in my room, and everything that I want?"

"Because you are a woman and a child."

"Nonsense! Then must men be cold and hungry?"

"Some men."

"Very good! I'll come here so often that you will be obliged to have a fire."

Or else it was: —

"Father, why do you eat such wretched bread as that?"

"Because I do, my daughter."

"Well, if you eat it, I shall eat it, too."

And so to prevent Cosette from eating black bread, Jean Valjean ate white bread.

Cosette remembered her childhood but confusedly. She prayed night and morning for the mother whom she had never known. The Thénardiers were like two hideous figures seen in a dream. She remembered that she had gone "one day at night" to fetch water in a wood; she thought that it was a long distance from Paris. It seemed to her as if she had begun life in an abyss, and that Jean Valjean had rescued her from it. Her childhood produced on her the effect of a time when there was nought but centipedes, spiders, and snakes, around her. When she thought at night before she fell asleep, as she had no very clear idea that she was Jean Valjean's daughter, she imagined that her mother's soul had passed into this good man, and had come to dwell near her. When he was sitting down, she leaned her cheek on his white hair, and silently dropped a tear, saying to herself: "Perhaps this man is my mother!"

Cosette, strange though it may be, in the profound ignorance of a girl educated in a convent (maternity being absolutely unintelligible to virginity), eventually imagined that she had had as little of a mother as possible. This mother's name she did not know; and whenever she spoke to Jean Valjean on the subject, he held his tongue. If she repeated her question, he answered by a smile; and once, when she pressed him, the smile ended in a tear. This silence on his part cast a shadow over Fantine. Was it prudence? Was it respect? Or was it a fear of intrusting that name to the chances of another memory besides his own?

So long as Cosette was little, Jean Valjean readily talked to her about her mother, but when she grew up it

was impossible for him to do so; he felt as if he dared not do it. Was it on account of Cosette, or of Fantine? He felt a sort of religious horror at letting that shadow enter Cosette's thoughts, and of making a dead woman a third person in their destiny. The more sacred that shade was to him, the more it was to be feared. He thought of Fantine, and felt himself overwhelmed with silence.

He saw vaguely in the darkness something that resembled a finger laid on a lip. Had all the modesty which was in Fantine, and which, during her existence, had violently quitted her, returned after death, to watch indignantly over the dead woman's peace, and sternly guard her in the tomb? Was Jean Valjean himself unconsciously submitting to its pressure? We who believe in death are not prepared to reject this mysterious explanation.

Thence arose the impossibility of pronouncing, even to Cosette, the name of Fantine. One day Cosette said to him: —

"Father, I saw my mother last night in a dream. She had two large wings. My mother must have been almost a saint when she was alive."

"Through martyrdom," replied Jean Valjean.

Altogether, though, he was happy; when Cosette went out with him, she leaned on his arm, proudly and happily, in the fulness of her heart. Jean Valjean felt his heart melt with delight at all these marks of such exclusive tenderness, so satisfied with himself alone. The poor man, inundated with angelic joy, trembled. He assured himself with transports that this would last his whole life; he said to himself that he had not really suffered enough to deserve such radiant happiness, and he thanked God, in the depths of his soul, for having allowed him, wretch that he was, to be loved by this innocent being.

CHAPTER V.

THE ROSE DISCOVERS THAT IT IS A WEAPON OF WAR.

ONE day Cosette happened to look at herself in the glass, and said, "Good gracious!" It almost seemed to her that she was pretty. This threw her into a singular trouble. Up to this moment she had not thought of her face; and though she saw herself in the mirror, she did not look at herself. And then, she had often been told that she was ugly; Jean Valjean alone said gently, "Oh, no! oh, no!" However this might be, Cosette had always believed herself ugly, and had grown up in that belief with the facile resignation of childhood. And now, all at once, her looking-glass said to her, as Jean Valjean had said, "Oh, no!" She did not sleep that night. "Suppose I were pretty," she thought. "How odd it would be if I were pretty!" and she remembered those of her companions whose beauty had produced a sensation in the convent; and she said to herself: "What! am I like Mademoiselle So-and-so?"

Next day she looked at herself, but not accidentally, and she doubted: "Where was my sense?" she said;

"no, I am ugly." She had simply slept badly, — her eyes were heavy, and her cheeks pale. She had not felt very joyous on the previous day when she fancied herself pretty, but was sad at no longer believing it. She did not look at herself again; and for more than a fortnight she tried to dress her hair with her back to the glass.

In the evening, after dinner, she usually worked at her embroidery in the drawing-room, while Jean Valjean read by her side. Once she raised her eyes from her work, and was greatly surprised by the anxious way in which her father was gazing at her. Another time she was walking along the street, and it seemed to her that she heard some one behind her, whom she did not see, say: "A pretty woman, but badly dressed." "Nonsense!" she thought, "it is not I, for I am well dressed and ugly." She was then wearing her plush bonnet and merino dress. At last, one day, she was in the garden, and heard poor old Toussaint say: "Master, do you notice how pretty Missy is growing?" Cosette did not hear her father's answer. Toussaint's words produced a sort of commotion in her. She ran out of the garden, flew up to her room, rushed to the glass, — it was three months since she had looked at herself, — and uttered a cry. She dazzled herself.

She was beautiful, she was exquisite; she could not help agreeing with Toussaint and her glass. Her figure was formed, her skin had grown white, her hair was glossy, and a strange splendour lit up her blue eyes. The consciousness of her beauty came upon her in a minute, like the sudden dawn of day. Other people noticed it too. Toussaint said so. It was evidently to herself that the passer-by alluded; there could no longer be any doubt of that. She returned to the garden, believing herself a queen, hearing the birds sing, though it was winter, seeing the golden sky, the sun amid the trees,

flowers on the shrubs; she was wild, distraught, and in a state of ineffable rapture.

Jean Valjean, on his side, experienced a profound and inexplicable oppression. For some time past, in truth, he had contemplated with dover the beauty which daily appeared more radiant in Cosette's sweet face. It was a laughing lamp for all, but most unsteadful for him.

Cosette had been beautiful for a long time before she perceived the fact. But from the very first day, that unexpected light, which slowly rose and gradually developed the girl's entire person, hurt Jean Valjean's sunken eyes. He felt that it was a change in a happy life,—so happy that he did not dare to move, for fear of derranging it somehow. This man, who had passed through every possible distress, who was still bleeding from the wounds dealt him by destiny, who had been almost wicked, and had become almost a saint, who, after dragging the galley-chain, was now dragging the invisible but weighty chain of indefinite infamy; this man whom the law had not set free, and who might at any moment be recaptured and dragged from the obscurity of his virtue to the broad daylight of public opprobrium,—this man accepted everything, excused everything, pardoned everything, blessed everything, wished everything well and only asked one thing of Providence, of men, of the laws, of society, of Nature, of the world: that Cosette should love him,—that Cosette might continue to love him: that God would not prevent the heart of this child from turning to him and remaining with him! Loved by Cosette, he felt healed, at rest, appeased, overwhelmed, rewarded and crowned. With Cosette's love all was well, and he asked no more! Had any one said to him: "Would you like to be better off?" he would have answered: "No." Had God said to him: "Do you wish for heaven?" he would have answered: "I should lose by it."

All that could affect this situation, were it only on the surface, made him shudder as the beginning of something else. He had never known very distinctly what a woman's beauty was; but he understood, instinctively, that it was terrible.

This beauty, which bloomed more and more triumphantly and superbly at his side, beneath his eyes, upon the ingenuous and formidable brow of the child, from the depths of his ugliness, old age, misery, reprobation, and despondency, terrified him, and he said to himself: "How beautiful she is. What will become of me?" Here lay the difference between his tenderness and that of a mother; what he saw with agony, a mother would have seen with joy.

The first symptoms speedily manifested themselves. From the day when Cosette said to herself: "I am decidedly good-looking," she paid attention to her toilet. She remembered the remark of the passer-by: "Pretty, but badly dressed," the breath of an oracle which passed by her and died, after depositing in her heart one of those two germs which are destined, later on, to occupy a woman's entire life, — coquetry. The other is love.

With faith in her beauty, all her feminine soul expanded within her. She had a horror of merinos, and felt ashamed of plush. Her father had never refused her anything. She knew at once the whole science of the hat, the dress, the mantle, the slipper, and the sleeve, of the fabric that is in fashion, and the colour that is becoming, — the science which makes the Parisian woman something so charming, profound, and dangerous. The expression "an intoxicating woman" was invented for the Parisian.

In less than a month, little Cosette, in that Thebaïd of the Rue de Babylone, was not only one of the prettiest

women, which is something, but one of the "best dressed" women in Paris, which is a great deal more. She would have liked to meet her "passer-by," to see what he would say, and to "teach him a lesson." The fact is, that she was in every respect ravishing, and could admirably distinguish a bonnet from Gerard's from one of Herbautt's, in a wonderful way. Jean Valjean regarded these ravages with anxiety. He who felt that he could never do more than crawl, or walk at the most, could see Cosette's wings growing. However, by a mere inspection of Cosette's toilet, a woman would have seen that she had no mother. Certain small proprieties and special conventionalities were not observed by Cosette. A mother, for instance, would have told her that a young girl does not wear brocade.

The first day that Cosette went out in her dress and cloak of black brocade, and her white crape bonnet, she took Jean Valjean's arm, gay, radiant, blushing, proud, and striking. "Father," she said, "how do you think I look?" Jean Valjean replied, in a voice which resembled the bitter voice of envy: "Charming!" During the walk he was as usual; but when he returned home, he asked Cosette: —

"Shall you not wear that dress and bonnet, you know which, again?"

This took place in Cosette's room. She turned to the wardrobe in which her boarding-school dress was hanging.

"That disguise?" said she; "how can you expect it, father? Oh, no, indeed; I shall never put on those horrors again. With that thing on my head I look a regular dowdy."

Jean Valjean heaved a deep sigh.

From that moment he noticed that Cosette, who had hitherto asked to stay at home, saying: "Father, I enjoy myself much better here with you," now constantly asked

to go out. In truth, what is the use of having a pretty face and a delicious toilet if you cannot show them? He also noticed that Cosette no longer had the same liking for the backyard. She now preferred the garden, where she liked to walk up and down, before the gate. Jean Valjean never set foot in the garden, but remained in the backyard, like the dog.

Cosette, knowing herself to be beautiful, lost the grace of being ignorant of the fact, — an exquisite grace, for beauty heightened by simplicity is ineffable; and nothing is so adorable as a dazzling and innocent maiden, who walks along unconsciously, holding in her hand the key to paradise. But what she lost in ingenuous grace she regained in pensive and serious charm. Her whole person, permeated with the joys of youth, innocence, and beauty exhaled a splendid melancholy.

It was at this period that Marius saw her again at the Luxembourg, after an interval of six months.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BATTLE BEGINS.

COSETTE in her shadow, like Marius in his, was all ready to take fire. Destiny, with its mysterious and fatal patience, slowly brought these two beings together, all charged and primed with the stormy electricity of passion, — these two souls laden with love as two clouds are laden with thunder, and which were destined to meet and mingle in a glance like the clouds in a flash of fire.

The power of a glance has been so abused in love romances that it has at last fallen into disrepute. A writer hardly dares assert nowadays, that two beings fell in love because they looked at each other. And yet that is the way, and the only way, in which people fall in love. The rest is merely the rest, and comes afterward. Nothing is more real than the mighty shocks which two souls give each other by exchanging this spark. When Cosette unconsciously gave that glance which troubled Marius, Marius did not suspect that he too gave a glance which troubled Cosette.

He did her the same harm and the same good. For a long time she had seen and examined him in the way girls see and examine, while looking elsewhere. Marius still thought Cosette ugly, when Cosette had already begun to consider Marius handsome. But as the young man paid no attention to her, he was an object of indifference. Still, she could not refrain from saying to herself that he had silky hair, fine eyes, regular teeth, an agree-

able voice, when she heard him talking with his companions; that he held himself badly perhaps, but with a grace of his own; that he did not appear at all stupid; that his whole person was noble, gentle, simple, and proud, and that, in short, though he seemed poor, he had the bearing of a gentleman.

On the day when their eyes met, and at length suddenly said to each other those first obscure and ineffable things which the eye stammers, Cosette did not at first understand. She returned pensively to the house in the Rue de l'Ouest, where Jean Valjean was spending six weeks, according to his wont. When she awoke next morning she thought of the young stranger, so long indifferent and cold, who now seemed to pay attention to her; and this attention was not at all agreeable to her. On the contrary, she felt a little angry with the handsome, disdainful fellow. A warlike feeling was aroused. She felt a very childish joy at the thought that she was at length about to be avenged.

Knowing herself to be lovely, she felt, though in an indistinct way, that she possessed a weapon. Women play with their beauty as children do with a knife. They wound themselves.

Our reader will remember Marius's hesitations, palpitations, and terrors; he remained on his bench and did not approach. This vexed Cosette. One day she said to Jean Valjean: "Father, suppose we stroll in that direction?" Seeing that Marius did not come to her, she went to him. In such cases, every woman resembles Mahomet. And then, strange to say, the first symptom of true love in a young man is timidity; in a girl, it is boldness. This is surprising, and yet nothing is simpler; the two sexes have a tendency to approach, and each assumes the qualities of the other. That day, Cosette's glance drove Marius mad, while his glance made Cosette tremble. Marius

went away confident, and Cosette uneasy. From that day forth, they adored each other.

The first thing that Cosette experienced was a confused and deep melancholy. It seemed to her that her soul had become black in a single day. She no longer recognized it. The whiteness of soul in maidens, which is composed of coldness and gayety, is like snow; it melts before love, which is its sun.

Cosette knew not what love was. She had never heard the word uttered in its earthly sense. In the books of profane music which entered the convent, the word *drum* (*tambour* or *pandour*) was substituted for *love* (*amour*). This produced enigmas which exercised the imagination of the big girls, as: "Ah, how agreeable is the drum!" or, "Pity is not a pandour!" But Cosette left the convent at too early an age to trouble herself much about the "drum." Therefore she did not know what name to give to what she now felt. But are we the less ill because we do not know the name of our disease?

She loved with all the more passion, because she loved in ignorance. She did not know whether it was good or bad, useful or dangerous, necessary or mortal, eternal or transient, permitted or prohibited; she loved. She would have been greatly surprised had any one said to her: "You do not sleep? Why, that is forbidden. You do not eat? That is very wrong. You have an oppression and palpitation of the heart? That cannot be tolerated. You blush, and turn pale, when a certain person dressed in black appears at the end of a certain green walk? Why, that is abominable!" She would not have understood, and would have replied: "How can I be to blame in a matter with which I have nothing to do, and of which I know nothing?"

It happened that the love which presented itself was the one most in harmony with the state of her soul. It

was a sort of distant adoration, a mute contemplation, the deification of an unknown man. It was the apparition of youth to youth; the dream of nights become a romance and remaining a dream; the wished-for phantom at length realized and made flesh, but as yet having no name, or wrong, or flaw, or claim, or defect, — in a word, the distant lover who remained ideal, a chimera which assumed a shape. Any nearer and more palpable meeting would at this first stage have startled Cosette, who was still half immersed in the exaggerated mists of the cloister. She had all the fears of children and all the fears of nuns combined. The spirit of the convent, with which she had been impregnated for five years, was still slowly evaporating from her whole person and making everything tremble around her. In this situation, it was not a lover she wanted, not even an admirer, but a vision. She set herself to adoring Marius as something charming, luminous, and impossible.

As extreme simplicity trenches on extreme coquetry, she smiled upon him most frankly. She daily awaited impatiently the hour for the walk; she saw Marius, she felt indescribably happy, and sincerely believed that she was expressing her entire thoughts when she said to Jean Valjean: "What a delicious garden the Luxembourg is!"

Marius and Cosette were still in the dark as to each other; they did not speak, they did not bow, they did not know each other. They saw each other; and like the stars in the heavens, which are millions of leagues apart, they lived by looking at each other.

It was thus that Cosette gradually became a woman, and developed beautiful and loving, conscious of her beauty and ignorant of her love. She was a coquette into the bargain, through her innocence.

CHAPTER VII.

ONE SORROW LEADS TO ANOTHER.

ALL situations have their instincts. Old and eternal Mother Nature warned Jean Valjean of the presence of Marius. Jean Valjean trembled in the depth of his mind. He saw nothing, knew nothing, and yet he studied with obstinate attention the darkness in which he was, as if he felt on one side something being built up, on the other something crumbling away. Marius, who was also warned by the same Mother Nature, in obedience to the deep law of the good God, did all in his power to conceal himself from the "father." But, for all that, Jean Valjean sometimes perceived him. Marius's manner was no longer in the least natural. He displayed a clumsy prudence and an awkward temerity. He no longer came quite close to them, as he had formerly done; he sat down at a distance and remained in an ecstasy. He had a book, and pretended to read it. Why did he pretend? Formerly he came in his old coat, and now he wore his new one every day. Jean Valjean was not quite sure that he did not have his hair curled; he had very queer eyes, he wore gloves; in short, Jean Valjean cordially detested the young man.

Cosette allowed nothing to be guessed. Without knowing exactly what was the matter with her, she had a feeling that there was something, and that it must be hidden. There was a coincidence which annoyed Jean

Valjean, between the taste for dress which had recently come to Cosette, and the habit of wearing new clothes acquired by this stranger. It was an accident, perhaps; of course it was, — but a menacing accident.

He never opened his mouth to Cosette about this stranger. One day, however, he could not refrain, and said, with that vague despair which suddenly thrusts the probe into its own misfortune: "That young man looks like a pedant." Cosette, a year previously, when still a careless little girl, would have answered: "Oh, no; he is charming." Ten years later, with the love of Marius in her heart, she would have replied: "An insufferable pedant; you are quite right." At the present moment of her life and heart she restricted herself to saying, with supreme calmness: "That young man!" Just as if she saw him for the first time in her life.

"How stupid I am!" thought Jean Valjean. "She had not even noticed him, and now I have pointed him out to her."

Oh, the simplicity of old people! Oh, the depth of children!

It is another law of these early years of suffering and care, of these sharp struggles between a first love and its first obstacles, that the maiden cannot be caught in any snare, while the young man falls into all. Jean Valjean had begun a secret war against Marius, which Marius, with the sublime stupidity of his passion and his age, did not guess. Jean Valjean laid all sorts of snares for him. He changed his hour, he changed his bench, he forgot his handkerchief, he went alone to the Luxembourg. Marius plunged headlong into all these traps; and to all these notes of interrogation which Jean Valjean planted in his road he ingenuously answered, "Yes." Cosette, however, remained immured in her apparent indifference and her imperturbable tranquillity, so that Jean Valjean arrived

at this conclusion: "That booby is madly in love with Cosette, but Cosette does not even know that he exists."

For all that, though, he had a painful tremor in his heart. The minute when Cosette would love might arrive at any instant. Does not everything begin with indifference?

Only once did Cosette make a mistake and startle him. He arose from his bench to go home after a three hours' sitting, and she said: "What, already?"

Jean Valjean did not give up his walks at the Luxembourg, as he did not wish to do anything singular, and feared above all things to arouse Cosette's attention; but during the hours which were so sweet to the two lovers, while Cosette was sending her smile to the intoxicated Marius, who only perceived this, and now saw nothing in the world but a radiant, adored face, Jean Valjean fixed on Marius flashing and terrible eyes. He who had at last come to think himself no longer capable of a malevolent feeling, had moments when he felt, if Marius were present, as if he were growing savage and ferocious once more; and he felt those old depths of his soul which had formerly contained so much anger, open once more, and rise in revolt against that young man. It almost seemed to him as if unknown craters were again forming within him.

What! The fellow was there! What did he come for? He came to sniff, examine, and attempt; he came to say: "Well, why not?" He came to prowl round his, Jean Valjean's life, — to prowl round his happiness, to seize it and carry it away!

Jean Valjean added: "Yes, that is it! What is he seeking? An adventure! What does he want? A love affair! A love affair! And I! What! I was first the most wretched of men, and then the most unhappy. I have spent sixty years on my knees; I have suffered all that a

man can suffer; I have grown old without ever having been young; I have lived without family, parents, friends, children, or wife; I have left my blood on every stone, on every bramble, on every mile-post, on every wall; I have been gentle, though men were harsh to me, and good though they were wicked; I have become an honest man again, in spite of everything; I have repented of the evil I did, and pardoned the evil done to me; and at the moment when I am rewarded, when all is over, when I touched the goal, when I have what I wish, and it is but fair, — it is but right; I have paid for it, I have earned it, all this is to fade away, all this is to vanish, and I am to lose Cosette, my love, my joy, my soul, because it has pleased a long-legged ass to lounge about the Luxembourg garden!"

Then his eyes filled with a mournful and extraordinary light. He was no longer a man looking at a man; he was no longer an enemy looking at an enemy. He was a dog watching a robber.

Our readers know the rest. Marius continued to act madly. One day he followed Cosette to the Rue de l'Ouest. Another day he spoke to the porter. The porter in his turn spoke to Jean Valjean: "Do you happen to know, sir, a curious young man who has been making inquiries about you?" The next day Jean Valjean gave Marius that look which Marius at length noticed. A week later, Jean Valjean went away. He made a vow that he would never again set foot in the Rue de l'Ouest or the Luxembourg, and returned to the Rue Plumet.

Cosette did not complain; she said nothing, she asked no questions, she did not attempt to discover his motives, for she had reached that stage when a girl fears that her thoughts may be read, or that she may betray herself. Jean Valjean had no experience of these miseries, — the only miseries which are charming, and the only ones

with which he was not acquainted; therefore he did not comprehend the grave significance of Cosette's silence. He merely noticed that she had grown sad, and he became gloomy. Inexperience was contending on either side.

Once he made an essay, by asking Cosette: "Will you go to the Luxembourg?" A ray illuminated Cosette's pale face. "Yes," said she. They went; but three months had elapsed, and Marius had ceased to visit the garden. No Marius was there. The next day Jean Valjean again asked Cosette: "Will you go to the Luxembourg?" She answered sadly and gently, "No." Jean Valjean was hurt by the sadness and heart-broken by the gentleness.

What was taking place in this young mind which was already so impenetrable? What work was to be accomplished? What had happened to Cosette's soul? Sometimes, instead of sleeping, Jean Valjean remained seated on his bed, with his head between his hands; and he spent whole nights in asking himself: "What has Cosette on her mind?" and in thinking of the things of which she might be thinking.

Oh, at such moments what sad glances he turned toward the cloister, that chaste summit, that abiding place of angels, that inaccessible glacier of virtue! With what despairing ecstasy did he contemplate that convent garden, full of ignored flowers and immured virgins, where all perfumes and all souls ascend direct to heaven! How he adored that Eden, now closed against him forever, and which he had voluntarily and madly left! How he lamented his self-denial and his madness in bringing Cosette back to the world. Poor hero of sacrifice, seized and hurled down by his own devotion! How he said to himself, "What have I done!"

However, nothing of this was visible to Cosette,—

neither ill temper nor roughness. His face was ever the same, serene and kind. Jean Valjean's manner was even more tender and paternal than before. If anything could have betrayed his lack of joy, it was his increased gentleness.

On her side, Cosette pined. She suffered from Marius's absence, as she had revelled in his presence, singularly, and not exactly knowing why. When Jean Valjean ceased taking her for her usual walk, a feminine instinct had vaguely whispered to her heart that she must not appear to care for the Luxembourg, and that if she displayed indifference in the matter, her father would take her back there. But days, weeks, and months succeeded each other. Jean Valjean had tacitly accepted Cosette's tacit consent. She regretted it, but it was too late. When they returned to the Luxembourg, Marius was no longer there. He had disappeared then; it was all over. What could she do? Should she ever see him again? She felt a pang which nothing relieved, and which daily increased; she no longer knew whether it were summer or winter, sunshine or rain, whether the birds were singing, whether it was the dahlia or the daisy season, whether the Luxembourg was more charming than the Tuileries, whether the linen brought home by the washerwoman was too much or not enough starched, or whether Toussaint had done her "marketing" well or ill; and she remained depressed, absorbed, attentive to one thought alone, her eyes vague and fixed, like a person gazing through the darkness at a deep, black spot where a phantom has just vanished. Still, she did not allow Jean Valjean to see anything but her pallor. Her face was always gentle to him. This pallor, however, was more than sufficient to render Jean Valjean anxious. Sometimes he asked her: —

"What is the matter with you?"

And she answered: —

"Nothing."

After a silence she would add, as if guessing that he was sad too: —

"And you, father, is there anything the matter with you?"

"With me? Oh, nothing," he would reply.

These two beings, who had loved each other so exclusively, with such touching love, and who had lived so long for each other only, now suffered side by side, each on the other's account, without confessing it, without anger, and with a smile.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CHAIN-GANG.

JEAN VALJEAN was the more unhappy of the two. Youth, even in its sorrows, has always a brilliancy of its own.

At certain moments, Jean Valjean suffered so intensely that he became childish; for it is the peculiarity of grief to bring out a man's childish side. He had an unconquerable conviction that Cosette was slipping away from him. He longed to struggle, to hold her back, and to excite her enthusiasm by some external and brilliant achievement. These ideas, childish as we said, but at the same time senile, gave him, through their very childishness, a fair notion of the influence of gold lace upon the imagination of girls. One day Count Coutard, commandant of Paris, passed along the street on horseback, in full-dress uniform. He envied that gilded man, and said to himself: "What happiness it would be to be able to put on that coat, which is an undeniable thing; that if Cosette saw him so dressed, it would dazzle her; and

when he passed before the Tuileries gates, the sentinels would present arms to him, and that would be sufficient for Cosette, and would prevent her looking at young men."

An unexpected shock was soon added to these sad thoughts.

In the isolated life which they led, and since they had gone to reside in the Rue Plumet, they had one habit. They sometimes made a pleasure party to see the sun rise, — a species of mild enjoyment suited to those who are entering life and those who are leaving it.

To walk about at daybreak is equivalent, to the man who loves solitude, to walking about at night, with the gayety of Nature added. The streets are deserted and the birds sing. Cosette, herself a bird, generally woke at an early hour. These morning excursions were arranged on the previous evening; he proposed and she accepted. This was arranged like a plot; they went out before daybreak, and Cosette was delighted. These innocent eccentricities please youth.

Jean Valjean had, as we know, a liking for the least frequented places, solitary nooks, and forgotten spots. There were at that time in the vicinity of the gates of Paris, poor fields, almost forming part of the city, where sickly wheat grew in summer, and which in autumn, after the harvest was gathered, did not look as if they had been reaped, but flayed. Jean Valjean had a predilection for these fields. Cosette was not bored there. It was solitude for him and liberty for her. There she became a little girl again. She ran about and almost played; she took off her bonnet, laid it on Jean Valjean's knees, and plucked flowers. She watched the butterflies, but did not catch them; humanity and tenderness spring up with love, and the maiden who has a trembling and fragile ideal in her heart, feels pity for the butterfly's wing.

She twined wreaths of poppies, which she placed on her head, and which, traversed and penetrated with sunlight until they were flaming red, formed a fiery crown for her rosy face.

Even after their life had grown sad, they kept up their habit of early walks.

One October morning, therefore, tempted by the perfect serenity of the autumn of 1831, they went out, and found themselves just before daybreak near the Barrière du Maine. It was not quite morning yet, but it was dawn, — a wild and ravishing moment. There were a few stars in the pale azure sky; the earth was all black, the heavens all white; a shiver ran along the grass, and all around felt the mysterious influence of twilight. A lark, which seemed mingled with the stars, was singing at a prodigious height; and it seemed as if this hymn of littleness to infinitude calmed the immensity. In the east, the dark mass of Val de Grâce stood out steel-blue against the bright horizon; Venus rose glittering behind the dome, and looked like a soul escaping from a gloomy edifice.

All was peace and silence. There was no one on the highway; a few workmen going to their daily toil were indistinctly seen in the distance.

Jean Valjean was seated on some planks lying at the gate of a timber-yard. His face was turned to the road, and his back to the light; he forgot all about the sunrise, for he had fallen into one of those profound reveries in which the mind becomes concentrated, which imprison even the glance, and are equivalent to four walls. There are meditations which may be called wells; when you are at the bottom, it takes some time to reach the ground again. Jean Valjean had descended into one of these reveries. He was thinking of Cosette, of the happiness possible if nothing came betwixt him and her,

of that light with which she filled his life, and which was the very breath of his life. He was almost happy in this revery; and Cosette, standing by his side, was watching the clouds as they turned rose-hued.

All at once Cosette exclaimed: "Father, some one is coming over yonder!"

Jean Valjean raised his eyes. Cosette was right. The road which leads to the old Barrière du Maine is a prolongation of the Rue de Sèvres, and is crossed at right angles by the inner boulevard. At the spot where the roads cross, they heard a sound difficult to explain at such an hour, and a sort of confused mass appeared. Some shapeless thing coming along the boulevard was turning into the main road. It grew larger, and seemed to move in an orderly way, although it shook and heaved; it seemed to be a vehicle, but its load could not be distinguished. There were horses, wheels, shouts, and the cracking of whips. By degrees the outlines became fixed, though bathed in darkness. It was really a vehicle, coming toward the barrier near which Jean Valjean was seated. A second resembling it followed, then a third, then a fourth; seven carts came forward in turn, the heads of the horses touching the back of the vehicle in front. Figures moved on these carts, sparks were visible in the gloom, looking like naked swords, and a clank was heard like the rattle of chains; all this advanced, the voices became louder, and it was a fearful thing, such as issues from the cavern of dreams.

As it drew nearer, this thing assumed a shape, and stood out behind the trees with the livid hue of an apparition. The mass grew whiter; the gradually dawning day threw a ghastly gleam over this swarm, which was at once sepulchral and alive; the shadowy heads became the faces of corpses, and this is what it was: —

Seven vehicles were moving in file along the road.

The first six were of singular shape. They resembled brewers' drays, and consisted of long ladders laid upon two wheels, and forming a stretcher at the front end. Each dray, or, to speak more correctly, each ladder, was drawn by a team of four horses; and strange clusters of men were dragged along upon these ladders. In the faint light, these men were divined rather than seen. Twenty-four on each wagon, twelve on either side, back to back, their faces turned to the passers-by, and their legs hanging down, — this was the way in which these men travelled; and they had behind their backs something which rang, and was a chain, and on their necks something that glistened, which was an iron collar. Each man had his collar, but the chain was for all; so that these twenty-four men, if obliged to get down from the dray and walk, were seized by a species of inexorable unity, and were obliged to wind along the ground with the chain as backbone, very much like centipedes. At the front and back of each cart stood two men armed with guns, who stood erect, with their feet on the end of the chain. The seventh vehicle (a vast baggage-wagon, with rack sides but no hood) had four wheels and six horses, and carried a resounding mass of iron kettles, copper pots, braziers, and chains, with which were mingled a few men pinioned and stretched at full length, and who seemed to be ill. This baggage-wagon, which was quite open, was lined with broken-down hurdles, which seemed to have been formerly used as instruments of torture.

These vehicles kept to the middle of the road. On either side marched a double file of infamous-looking guards, wearing three-cornered hats, like the soldiers of the Directory, dirty, torn, and stained, muffled in uniforms half gray and half blue, a coat like those worn by veterans, and trousers like an undertaker's men, all in rags, with red epaulets and yellow belts; they were

armed with short sabres, muskets, and sticks, — a sort of soldier-blackguard. These bum-baileys seemed compounded of the abjectness of the beggar and the authority of the hangman. The one who appeared their leader held a postilion's whip in his hand. All these details, blurred by the dim light, grew more and more distinct in the advancing day. At the head and in the rear of the train rode mounted police with drawn swords.

The procession was so long that when the first vehicle reached the barrier, the last had scarcely turned out of the boulevard. A crowd, which came no one knew whence and formed in a second, as is so common in Paris, lined both sides of the road, and looked on. In the side lanes were heard the shouts of people calling to each other, and the wooden shoes of the market-gardeners running up to have a peep.

The men piled upon the drays allowed themselves to be jolted along in silence; they were livid with the morning chill. They all wore canvas trousers, and their naked feet were thrust into wooden shoes, but the rest of their attire was left to the fancy of wretchedness. Their accoutrements were hideously incongruous; for nothing is more mournful than the harlequin garb of rags. There were battered felt hats, tarpaulin caps, frightful woollen night-caps, and, side by side with the blouse, an out-at-elbow black coat; some wore women's bonnets, and others had baskets as head-gear; hairy chests were visible, and through the rents in their clothes tattooing could be seen, — temples of love, burning hearts, and Cupids; but ringworm and other unhealthy red blotches might also be noticed. Two or three had passed a straw rope through the side rail of the dray, which hung down like a stirrup and supported their feet. One of them held in his hand and raised to his mouth something which looked like a black stone, and which he seemed to be gnawing;

it was bread he was eating. All eyes were dry, dull, or bright with a wicked light. The escort cursed, but the chained men did not breathe a syllable; from time to time the sound of a blow, dealt with a stick on shoulder-blades or heads, could be heard. Some of these men yawned; their rags were terrible; their feet hung down; their shoulders swayed to and fro; their heads struck against each other; their irons rattled; their eyes flashed ferociously; their fists were clenched, or opened inertly like the hands of death. In the rear of the convoy a band of children roared with laughter.

This file of vehicles, whatever its nature might be, was lugubrious in the extreme. It was plain that within an hour a shower might fall; that it might be followed by another, and then another; that their ragged clothing would be drenched; and that, once wet through, these men would not dry again, and once chilled, would not get warm again; that their canvas trousers would be glued to their bones by the flood, the water would fill their wooden shoes, that no lashes from the whips could prevent their teeth from chattering, that the chain would continue to hold them by the neck, and their feet would continue to dangle; and it was impossible not to shudder at the sight of these human creatures thus bound and passive beneath the cold autumnal clouds, and surrendered to the rain, the wind, and all the furies of the air, like trees and stones.

Blows were not spared even the sick, who lay pinioned with ropes and motionless in the seventh vehicle, and who seemed to have been thrown down there like sacks filled with wretchedness.

All at once the sun appeared; the immense beams of the Orient leaped forth, and it seemed as if it set fire to all those ferocious heads. Tongues became untied, and a storm of sneers, oaths, and songs exploded. The broad

horizontal light cut the whole file in two, illumining heads and bodies, and leaving feet and wheels in obscurity. Thoughts appeared on faces; it was a fearful thing to see demons with their masks thrown away, and ferocious souls laid bare. Though lighted up, this mob was still gloomy. Some of the merrier ones had in their mouths quills, through which they blew vermin on the crowd, selecting women for their victims; the dawn accentuated their lamentable faces by the darkness of its shadows. Not one of those beings but was misshapen through wretchedness; and the sight was so monstrous that it seemed to change the light of the sun into the gleam of a lightning flash. The first cart-load heading the train struck up a tune, and were now loudly singing, with a haggard joviality, a potpourri by Desaugiers, then famous under the title of "The Vestal." The trees shivered mournfully; on the sidewalks common faces listened with idiotic rapture to these coarse songs chanted by spectres.

All sorts of distress could be found in this gang, as in chaos; there were the facial angles of every animal, old men, youths, bare skulls, gray beards, cynical monstrosities, sulky resignation, savage grins, senseless attitudes, youth, girlish heads with cork-screw curls on their temples, infantine and for that reason horrible faces, and thin skeleton countenances, which only lacked death. On the first dray was a negro, who had probably been a slave, and could make a comparison of his chains. The frightful leveller, shame, had passed over all these brows. At this stage of abasement the last transformations were undergone by all in the lowest depths; and ignorance changed into dulness was the equal of intellect turned to despair. No choice was possible among these men, who appeared to be the pick of the mud. It was clear that whoever arranged this unclean procession had not attempted any classification. These beings had been bound

and coupled pell-mell, probably in alphabetical disorder, and loaded hap-hazard on the carts. Still, horrors, when grouped, always end by evolving a result; every addition of wretched men produces a sum total. A common soul issued from each chain, and each dray-load had its own physiognomy. Beside the man who sang was one who yelled; a third begged; another gnashed his teeth; another threatened the passers-by; another blasphemed God, and the last was silent as the tomb. Dante would have fancied that he saw the seven circles of the Inferno in motion. It was the march of the damned to punishment, performed in a sinister way, not upon the fearful flashing car of the Apocalypse, but, more gloomy still, in the hangman's cart.

One of the keepers, who had a hook at the end of his stick, from time to time pretended to stir up the heap of human ordure. An old woman in the crowd pointed them out to a little boy of five years of age, and said to him: "You scamp, that will teach you!" As the songs and blasphemy grew louder, the man who seemed to be the captain of the escort cracked his whip, and at this signal a blind, indiscriminate bastinado fell with the sound of hail upon the seven cart-loads. Many yelled, and foamed at the mouth, which redoubled the joy of the gutter-snipes, who had come up like a cloud of flies settling upon these wounds. Jean Valjean's eyes had become frightful; they were no longer eyes, but those deep glass bulbs which take the place of the eye in some unfortunate men, which seem unconscious of reality, and in which flash the reflection of horrors and catastrophes. He was not looking at a spectacle, but beholding a vision. He strove to rise, fly, escape, but could not move a foot. Sometimes things which you see seize upon you, and root you to the ground. He remained nailed to the spot, stupid, asking himself through confused and inexpressible

anguish what was the meaning of this sepulchral persecution, and whence came this Pandemonium that pursued him. All at once he raised his hand to his forehead, the usual gesture of those to whom memory suddenly returns; he remembered that this was really the road taken, that this *détour* was usual to avoid all possibility of meeting with royalty on the Fontainebleau road, and that five-and-thirty years before he had passed through that barrier.

Cosette was no less horrified, though in a different way. She did not understand, her breath failed her; what she saw did not appear to her possible. At length she exclaimed: —

"Father, what is there in those vehicles?"

Jean Valjean answered: —

"Convicts."

"Where are they going?"

"To the galleys."

At this moment the bastinado, multiplied by a hundred hands, became tremendous; strokes with the flat of the sword were mingled with it. It was a regular tornado of whips and sticks. The galley-slaves bowed their heads; a hideous obedience was produced by the torture, and all were silent, with the looks of chained wolves. Cosette, trembling in every limb, continued: —

"Father, are they still men?"

"Sometimes," replied the wretched man.

It was, indeed, the chain-gang, which, leaving Bicêtre before daybreak, had taken the Mans road, to avoid Fontainebleau, where the king then was. This *détour* made the fearful journey last three or four days longer; but torture may surely be prolonged to save a royal personage the sight of it. Jean Valjean went home utterly crushed. Such encounters are shocks, and the memory that they leave behind is like a concussion. As they walked along the Rue de Babylone, Jean Valjean did

not notice that Cosette asked him other questions about what they had just seen; perhaps he was himself too absorbed in his own despondency to notice her remarks and answer them. At night, however, when Cosette left him to go to bed, he heard her say in a low voice, and as if speaking to herself: "I feel that if I were to meet one of those men in the street I should die just from being so close to him."

Luckily, the day after this tragic interlude there were festivals in Paris on account of some official solemnity (I have forgotten what), — a review at the Champ de Mars, jousts on the Seine, theatrical performances in the Champs Elysées, fireworks at the Arc de l'Etoile, and illuminations everywhere. Jean Valjean, doing violence to his habits, took Cosette to see these rejoicings, in order to divert her from the scene of the previous day, and to efface, beneath the laughing tumult of all Paris, the abominable thing which had passed before her. The review, which spiced the festival, made the presence of uniforms very natural; hence Jean Valjean put on his National Guard coat, with the vague inner feeling of a man who is seeking a refuge. However, the object of this jaunt seemed to be attained. Cosette, who made it a law to please her father, and to whom all spectacles were a novelty, accepted the distraction with the light and easy good grace of youth, and did not make too disdainful a pout at the porringer of joy which is called a public holiday. Hence Jean Valjean might well believe that he had succeeded, and that no trace of the hideous vision remained.

A few days later, one morning when the sun was shining, both were on the garden steps, — another infraction of the rules which Jean Valjean seemed to have imposed on himself, and of that habit of remaining in her chamber which sadness had caused Cosette to assume.

"Cosette was standing in that negligent morning dress which adorably envelops maidens."

Photogravure. From Painting by Jeanniot.

The girl, wearing a combing jacket, was standing in that negligent morning dress, which adorably envelops maidens, and which looks like a cloud over a star; and with her head in the light, her cheeks pink from a good night's rest, gazed at softly by the old man, she was plucking the petals of a daisy. She did not know the enchanting legend: "I love you, a little, passionately," etc., for who could have taught it to her? She handled the flower instinctively and innocently, without suspecting that to pluck a daisy to pieces is to do the same by a heart. If there were a fourth and smiling Grace called Melancholy, she looked as that Grace would look. Jean Valjean was fascinated by the contemplation of those little fingers on that flower, forgetting everything in the radiance which surrounded the child. A red-breast was twittering in a bush hard by, and white clouds crossed the sky so gayly that you might have said that they had just been set at liberty. Cosette continued to pluck her flower attentively. She seemed to be thinking of something; but whatever it was it must have been charming. All at once she turned her head on her shoulder, with the delicate slowness of a swan, and said to Jean Valjean: "Tell me, father, what the galleys are."

BOOK IV.

SUCCOUR FROM BELOW MAY BE SUCCOUR FROM ON HIGH.

CHAPTER I.

A WOUND WITHOUT AND HEALING WITHIN.

THEIR life thus gradually became overcast.

Only one diversion was left them, which had formerly been a happiness, and that was to carry bread to those who were starving and clothes to those who were cold. In these visits to the poor, in which Cosette frequently accompanied Jean Valjean, they recovered some portion of their old freedom from reserve, and sometimes, when the day had been a good one, when they had relieved much want, and warmed and re-animated many children, Cosette displayed a little gayety at night.

It was at this period that they paid a visit to Jondrette's den.

The day after that visit, Jean Valjean appeared at an early hour in the pavilion, calm as usual, but with a large wound on his left arm, which was very inflamed and venomous, which resembled a burn, and which he accounted for in some way or other. This wound kept him at home with a fever for a whole month. He would not see any medical man; and when Cosette pressed him, he said: "Call in the dog-doctor." Cosette dressed his wound morning and night with so divine an air and such angelic happiness at being useful to him, that Jean Valjean felt all his former joy return, his fears and anxieties dissipated; and he gazed at Cosette, saying: "Oh, what an excellent wound! What a friendly misfortune!"

Cosette, seeing her father ill, had deserted the pavilion, and regained her taste for the little outhouse and the back court. She spent nearly the whole day by the side of Jean Valjean, and read to him any books he chose, which were generally travels. Jean Valjean was born again; his happiness returned with ineffable radiance. The Luxembourg, the prowling young stranger, Cosette's coldness, — all these clouds upon his soul disappeared, and he found himself saying: "I imagined all that; I am an old fool!"

His happiness was such that the frightful discovery of the Thénardiers in the Jondrette den, unexpected as it was, had to some extent glided over him unnoticed. He had succeeded in escaping; all trace of him was lost. What did he care for the rest? He only thought of those wretches to pity them. They were in prison, and henceforth incapable of mischief, he thought; but what a lamentable family in distress!

As for the hideous vision of the Barrière du Maine, Cosette had not alluded to it again.

In the convent, Sister St. Mechtilde had taught Cosette music; she had a voice such as a linnet would have if it possessed a soul; and sometimes she sang, in the wounded man's obscure room, melancholy songs which delighted Jean Valjean.

Spring came, and the garden was so delicious at that season of the year that Jean Valjean said to Cosette: "You never go out, and I wish you to take a stroll." "As you please, father," said Cosette. And, to obey her father, she resumed her walks in the garden, generally alone; for, as we have mentioned, Jean Valjean, who was probably afraid of being seen through the fence, hardly ever entered it.

Jean Valjean's wound had created a diversion.

When Cosette saw that her father suffered less, that he was recovering and seemed happy, she felt a satisfaction which she did not even notice, for it came so softly and naturally. Then, too, it was the month of March, the days were growing longer, winter was departing, and it always takes with it some portion of our sorrow; then came April, that daybreak of summer, fresh as every dawn, and gay like all childhood; somewhat tearful at times, like the new-born babe that it is. Nature in that month has charming gleams which pass from the sky, the clouds, the trees, the fields, and the flowers into the human heart.

Cosette was still too young to escape the all-pervading influence of this April joy, which resembled her own nature; insensibly, and without suspecting it, the dark cloud departed from her mind. In spring there is light in sad souls, as there is at midday in cellars. Cosette was no longer so very sad, though she did not attempt to account for it. In the morning, after breakfast, when she succeeded in drawing her father into the garden for a quarter of an hour, and walked him up and down, sup-

porting his injured arm for him, she did not notice that she laughed every moment and was happy.

Jean Valjean was delighted to see her become ruddy-cheeked and fresh once more.

"Oh, what a famous wound!" he repeated to himself in a low voice.

And he was grateful to the Thénardiers.

So soon as his wound was healed he resumed his solitary twilight rambles.

It is a mistake to suppose that a man can walk about alone in the uninhabited regions of Paris without meeting with some adventure.

CHAPTER II.

MOTHER PLUTARCH EXPLAINS A MIRACLE.

ONE evening little Gavroche had eaten nothing; he remembered that he had not dined on the previous day either; this was becoming ridiculous. He resolved to try to get some supper. He went prowling about the deserted spots beyond the Salpetrière, for there are often good windfalls there; where there is nobody, something may be found. He thus reached a suburb which seemed to him to be the village of Austerlitz.

In one of his previous prowls he had noticed an old garden there, frequented by an old man and an old woman, and in this garden a passable apple-tree. Beside this tree was a sort of a fruit-loft, which was not locked, and where an apple might be obtained. An apple is a supper, an apple is life. What proved Adam's ruin, might save Gavroche. The garden skirted a solitary, unpaved lane, bordered by bushes, until houses should come; a hedge separated it from the lane.

Gavroche proceeded to the garden. He found the lane, he recognized the apple-tree, saw the fruit-loft, and exam-

ined the hedge; a hedge is but a stride. Day was declining; there was not even a cat in the lane, and the hour was propitious. Gavroche was preparing to clamber over the hedge, when he stopped short. Some one was talking in the garden. Gavroche looked through a break in the hedge. Two paces from him, at the foot of the hedge, on the other side, at the very spot where the hole he intended to make would have ended, lay a stone, which formed a bench; and on this bench sat the old man of the garden, with the old woman standing in front of him. The old woman was grumbling, and Gavroche, who was not troubled with too much discretion, listened.

"Monsieur Mabœuf!" said the old woman.

"Mabœuf!" thought Gavroche; "that's a rum name."

The old man thus addressed, did not stir; and the old woman repeated: —

"Monsieur Mabœuf!"

The old man, without taking his eyes off the ground, made up his mind to answer: —

"Well, Mother Plutarch!"

"Mother Plutarch!" thought Gavroche; "that's another rum name."

Mother Plutarch continued, and the old gentleman was compelled to accept the conversation.

"The landlord is not satisfied."

"Why so?"

"You owe him three quarters rent."

"In three months more, we shall owe him four."

"He says that he will turn you out."

"I will go."

"The green-grocer wants to be paid. She will supply no more fagots. How shall we warm ourselves this winter, if we have no wood?"

"There is the sun."

"The butcher refuses us any more credit; he will not supply any more meat."

"That is lucky. I cannot digest meat. It is too heavy."

"But what shall we have for dinner?"

"Bread."

"The baker says he must have something on account. 'No money, no bread,' he says."

"Very good."

"What will you eat?"

"We have the apples from the apple-tree."

"But, really, sir, we cannot live in that way without money."

"I have none."

The old woman went away and left the old gentleman alone. He fell to thinking. Gavroche thought too. It was almost night. The first result of Gavroche's reflections was that, instead of climbing over the hedge, he lay down under it. The branches parted a little at the bottom.

"Hullo!" said Gavroche to himself, "it's a regular nest;" and he crept into it. His back almost touched the octogenarian's bench, and he could hear him breath. Then, in lieu of dining, Gavroche tried to sleep. It was the sleep of a cat, with one eye open; while he dozed he watched. The clear twilight sky blanched the earth, and the lane formed a livid line between two rows of dark thickets. All at once, two figures appeared on this white strip; one was in front and the other a little distance behind.

"Here come two coves," growled Gavroche.

The first figure seemed to be some old, bent citizen, more than simply attired, who walked slowly, owing to his age, and who was strolling about in the starlight. The second was straight, firm, and slim. He regulated his pace by that of the man in front; but suppleness and

agility could be detected in his voluntary slowness. This figure had something ferocious and alarming about it. The whole appearance was that of what was called a dandy in those days; the hat was of good shape, and the coat was black, well cut, probably of fine cloth, and fitted closely at the waist. The head was held well up, with a sort of robust grace, and under the hat a pale, youthful profile was dimly seen in the twilight. This profile had a rose in its mouth, and was familiar to Gavroche; for it was Montparnasse. As for the other, there was nothing to be said, save that he was a respectable old man.

Gavroche at once began to take observations, for it was evident that one of these men had projects on the other. Gavroche was well situated to see the result, and the nest had opportunely become a hiding-place. Montparnasse hunting at such an hour and in such a spot, that was suspicious. Gavroche felt his heart moved with pity for the old gentleman. What should he do? Interfere? One weakness helping another! Montparnasse would have laughed at it; for Gavroche was not blind to the fact that the old man first, and then the boy, would be only two mouthfuls for this terrible bandit of eighteen.

While Gavroche was deliberating, the attack, a sudden and hideous attack, took place; it was the attack of a tiger on a wild ass, of a spider on a fly. Montparnasse, suddenly threw away his rose, leaped upon the old man, grappled him, and clung to him; and Gavroche with difficulty repressed a cry. A moment after, one of these men was beneath the other, crushed, gasping, struggling, with a knee of marble upon his chest. But it was not exactly what Gavroche had anticipated; the man on the ground was Montparnasse, the one at the top the old fellow. All this took place a few yards from Gavroche. The old man received the shock, and repaid it so terribly that in an instant the assailant and the assailed changed parts.

"That's a tough old fellow," thought Gavroche. And he could not refrain from clapping his hands. But it was applause thrown away. It did not reach the two combatants, absorbed and deafened as they were one by the other, as their breath mingled in the struggle.

At length there was a silence, and Montparnasse ceased writhing; Gavroche indulged in this aside: "Is he dead?" The old man had not uttered a word or a cry; he rose, and Gavroche heard him say to Montparnasse: "Get up!"

Montparnasse did so, but the man still held him. Montparnasse had the humiliated and furious attitude of a wolf snapped at by a sheep. Gavroche looked and listened, making an effort to reinforce his eyes with his ears. He was enjoying himself hugely. He was rewarded for his conscientious anxiety in his character of spectator. He caught on the wing this dialogue, which borrowed from the darkness a sort of tragic accent. The old man questioned, and Montparnasse answered.

"How old are you?"

"Nineteen."

"You are strong and healthy. Why do you not work?"

"It is a bore."

"What is your trade?"

"Idler."

"Speak seriously. Can anything be done for you? What would you like to be?"

"A robber."

There was a pause. The old gentleman seemed to be lost in thought, but he did not relax his hold on Montparnasse. Every now and then, the young rascal, who was vigorous and active, gave a start like a wild beast caught in a snare He shook himself, attempted a trip, wildly twisted his limbs, and tried to escape. The old gentleman did not appear to notice it, and held the

ruffian's two arms with one hand with the sovereign indifference of absolute strength.

The old man's revery lasted some time; then, gazing fixedly at Montparnasse, he mildly raised his voice and addressed to him, in the darkness where they stood, a sort of solemn appeal, of which Gavroche did not lose a syllable.

"My boy, you are entering, by sloth, one of the most laborious of existences. Ah! you declare yourself an idler; then prepare yourself for labour. Have you ever seen a dreadful machine called a rolling-mill? You must be on your guard against it. It is crafty and ferocious; and if it catch you by the skirt of the coat, you will be drawn in bodily. This machine is indolence. Stop while there is yet time, and save yourself! Otherwise, it is all over with you; ere long you will be among the cog-wheels. Once caught, hope for nothing more. Work, lazybones! No more rest for you! The iron hand of implacable toil has seized you. You refuse to earn your livelihood, to have a trade, and to do your duty! It bores you to be like other men. Well! you shall be different. Labour is the law; he who rejects it as a bore must have it as a punishment. You do not wish to be a labourer; you will be a slave. Toil only releases you on one side, to seize you again on the other. You would not be its friend; you shall be its negro slave. Ah, you did not care for the honest fatigue of men; you shall know the sweat of the damned. While others sing, you will groan. You will see other men working afar off, and they will seem to you to be resting. The digger, the reaper, the sailor, the blacksmith, will appear to you in the light like the blessed inmates of paradise. What radiance surrounds the anvil! What joy to guide the plow and bind the sheaf! What delight to fly before the wind in a boat! But you, idler, dig, delve, drag, roll,

walk! Pull at your halter. You are a beast of burden in the team of hell! So your desire is to do nothing? Well, you shall not have a week, a day, an hour, free from oppression. You shall not be able to lift anything without agony. Every passing minute will make your muscles crack. What is a feather to others will be a rock to you. The simplest things will become difficult. Life will become monstrous about you. To come, to go, to breathe, will be so many terrible tasks for you. Your lungs will feel like a hundred-pound weight. To go there rather than here will be a problem that must be solved. Any ordinary man who wishes to go out, merely opens his door and finds himself in the street; but if you wish to go out, you must pierce through your wall. What do honest men do to reach the street? They go downstairs. But you will tear up your sheets, make a rope of them, fibre by fibre, then climb through your window and hang by this thread over an abyss; and it will be night, in storm, rain, and hurricane; and if the rope be too short, you will have but one way of descending, to fall, — to fall hap-hazard into the gulf, and from any height, and on what? On some unknown thing beneath. Or you will crawl up a chimney, at the risk of burning; or creep through a sewer at the risk of drowning. I say nothing of the holes which must be masked, of the stones which you will have to remove and put back twenty times a day, or of the plaster you must hide under your mattress. A lock presents itself, and its owner has in his pocket the key, made by a locksmith; but you, if you would open it, are condemned to make a terrible masterpiece. You will take a big copper sou and cut it in two. You will have to invent your tools; that is your business. Then you will hollow out the interior of the two parts, being careful not to injure the outside, and form a thread all round the edge, so that the two parts may fit closely

like a box and its cover. When they are screwed together, there will be nothing suspicious to outsiders; for you will be watched. To men it will be a copper coin, but to you, a box. What will you put in this box? A small piece of steel, a watch-spring, in which you have cut teeth, and which will form a saw. With this saw, about as long as a pin, you will cut through bolts, locks, the padlock of your chain, the bar at your window, and the fetter on your leg. This masterpiece finished, this prodigy accomplished, all these miracles of art, skill, cleverness, and patience executed, what will be your reward if you are detected? A dungeon. Such is your future. What precipices are sloth and pleasure! To do nothing is a sorry resolve to take; are you aware of that? To live in indolence on the goods of others, to be useless, that is to say, injurious! This leads straight to the depths of misery. Woe to the man who would be a parasite! He will become vermin! Ah, it does not please you to work! Ah, you have but one thought, — to drink well, to eat well, and sleep well. You will drink water; you will eat black bread; you will sleep on a plank, with fetters riveted to your limbs, and will feel their cold touch at night on your flesh! You will break those fetters; you will fly. Very good. You will drag yourself on your stomach through the bushes, and eat grass like the beasts of the field. You will be recaptured, and then you will pass years in a dungeon, chained to the wall, groping in the dark for your water-jug, gnawing at frightful black bread which dogs would refuse, and eating beans which maggots have eaten before you. You will be a wood-louse in a cellar. Oh, have pity on yourself, wretched boy, still so young, who were at your nurse's breast not twenty years ago, and who have doubtless a mother still! I implore you to listen to me. You want fine black cloth, polished shoes, to scent your head with fragrant oil, to

please the girls, and to be a pretty fellow. You will have your hair shaved close, and wear a red jacket and wooden shoes. You want a ring on your finger; you shall wear an iron collar on your neck, and if you look at a woman, you will be beaten. And you will go in there at twenty. You will come out at fifty. You will go in young, red-cheeked, healthy, with your sparkling eyes, and all your white teeth and your curly locks, and you will come out again broken, bent, wrinkled, toothless, horrible, and gray-headed! Ah, my poor boy, you are on the wrong road; indolence is a bad adviser, for robbery is the hardest of all labours. Take my advice, and do not undertake the laborious task of being an idler. To become a rogue is inconvenient. It is not nearly so hard to be an honest man. Now go, and think over what I have said to you. By the bye, what did you want of me? My purse? Here it is." And the old man, releasing Montparnasse, placed his purse in the latter's hand.

Montparnasse weighed it for a moment, after which, with the same mechanical precaution as if he had stolen it, he let it glide gently into the back-pocket of his coat. All this said and done, the old gentleman turned his back and quietly resumed his walk.

"Old humbug!" muttered Montparnasse.

Who was the old gentleman? The reader has doubtless guessed.

Montparnasse, in his astonishment watched him until he had disappeared in the twilight. This contemplation was fatal to him. As the old gentleman retreated, Gavroche advanced.

Gavroche had assured himself by a glance that Father Mabœuf was still seated on his bench, and was probably asleep; then he left the bushes, and began to crawl after the motionless Montparnasse in the shadow. He thus reached the young ruffian unnoticed, gently insinuated his hand

into the back-pocket of the fine black cloth coat, seized the purse, withdrew his hand, and crawled back into the shadow like a lizard. Montparnasse, who had no reason to be on his guard, and who was thinking for the first time in his life, perceived nothing. When Gavroche had returned to the spot where Father Mabœuf was sitting, he threw the purse over the hedge and ran off at full speed. The purse fell on Father Mabœuf's foot and awoke him. He stooped and picked up the purse, which he opened, without comprehending anything. It was a purse with two compartments. In one was some change; in the other were six napoleons. M. Mabœuf, greatly alarmed, carried the thing to his housekeeper.

"It has fallen from heaven," said Mother Plutarch.

BOOK V.

THE END OF WHICH DOES NOT RESEMBLE THE BEGINNING.

CHAPTER I.

SOLITUDE AND THE BARRACKS COMBINED.

COSETTE'S sorrow, so poignant and so sharp four or five months earlier, had unconsciously reached the convalescent stage. Nature, spring, youth, love for her father, the gayety of the flowers and birds, filtered gradually, day by day and drop by drop, into her virginal young soul something almost like oblivion. Was the fire entirely extinct, or was it merely that layers of ashes had formed? The fact is, that she hardly felt any longer the painful and burning spot.

One day she suddenly thought of Marius: "Why," said she, "I had almost forgotten him!"

That same week she noticed, as he passed the garden gate, a very handsome officer of the lancers, with a wasp-like waist, a delightful uniform, the cheeks of a girl, a sabre under his arm, waxed mustaches, and lacquered schapka. Moreover, he had light hair, prominent blue eyes, a round, vain, insolent, and pretty face; he was exactly the contrary of Marius. He had a cigar in his mouth, and Cosette supposed that he belonged to the reg-

iment quartered in the barracks of the Rue de Babylone. Next day she saw him pass again, and took note of the hour. From that moment, — was it an accident? — she saw him pass nearly every day. The officer's comrades perceived that there was, in that "ill kept" garden, and behind that poor, old-fashioned fence, a very pretty creature, who was nearly always there when the handsome lieutenant, — who is no stranger to the reader, as his name is Théodule Gillenormand, — passed by.

"Hullo!" they said. "There 's a little girl making eyes at you; just look at her."

"Have I the time," replied the lancer, "to look at all the girls who look at me?"

It was at this very moment that Marius was descending slowly to the death struggle, and saying: "If I could only see her again before I die!" If his wish had been realized, had he seen Cosette at that moment looking at a lancer, he would have been unable to utter a word, and he would have expired of grief. Whose fault would it have been? Nobody's.

Marius possessed one of those temperaments which bury themselves in sorrow and abide in it. Cosette was one of those who plunge into it and again emerge.

Cosette, moreover, was passing through that dangerous moment, the fatal phase of feminine revery left to itself, in which the heart of an isolated maiden resembles those vine tendrils which cling, according to chance, to the capital of a marble column or to the sign-post of a pot-house. It is a rapid and decisive moment, critical for every orphan, whether she be poor or rich; for wealth does not prevent a bad choice, and misalliances take place in very high society. But the true misalliance is that of souls; and as many an unknown young man, without name, birth, or fortune, is a marble column supporting a temple of lofty sentiments and noble ideas, so such and such a

man of the world, satisfied and opulent, with polished boots and varnished words, if we look not at the outside but at the inside, that is to say, that which is reserved for his wife, is nought but a stupid log obscurely haunted by violent, unclean, and drunken passions, — the sign-post of the pot-house.

What was there in Cosette's soul? Passion calmed or lulled to sleep; love in a vague uncertain state; something limpid and brilliant, perturbed to a certain depth, and sombre lower down. The image of the handsome officer was reflected on the surface, but was there any memory lingering at the bottom, quite at the bottom? Perhaps so. Cosette did not know.

A singular incident occurred.

CHAPTER II.

COSETTE'S FEARS.

DURING the first fortnight in April, Jean Valjean went on a journey. This, as we know, occurred from time to time at very long intervals. He remained away one or two days at the utmost. Where did he go? No one knew, not even Cosette; once only she had accompanied him in a hackney coach, upon the occasion of one of these absences, to the corner of a little lane, which was called Impasse de la Planchette. There he got out, and the coach carried Cosette back to the Rue de Babylone. It was generally when money ran short in the house that Jean Valjean took these trips.

Jean Valjean, then, was absent. He had said: "I shall be back in three days."

That night Cosette was alone in the drawing-room, and in order to while away the time she opened her piano and began to sing to her own accompaniment the song from "Euryanthe," "Hunters wandering in the wood!" which is probably the finest thing we possess in the shape of music. When she had finished she was still pensive.

Suddenly she fancied she heard some one walking in the garden. It could not be her father, for he was away; and it could not be Toussaint, as she was in bed, for it was ten o'clock at night. Cosette went up to the drawing-room shutters, which were closed, and put her ear to them. It seemed to her that it was the footfall of a man who was walking very softly. She hurried up to her

room on the first-floor, opened one leaf of her shutter, and looked out into the garden. The moon was full and was shining bright as day. There was nobody there. She opened her window; the garden was perfectly calm, and all that could be seen of the street was as deserted as usual.

Cosette thought that she was mistaken. She had supposed that she heard a noise; it was a hallucination produced by Weber's gloomy and magnificent chorus, which opens before the mind prodigious depths, which trembles before the eye like a dizzy forest, in which we hear the crackling of dead branches under the restless feet of the hunters, of whom we catch a glimpse through the darkness.

She thought no more of it.

Moreover, Cosette was not naturally very timid; she had in her veins some of the blood of the gypsy and the adventuress who goes about barefoot. As we may remember, she was rather a lark than a dove, and she had a stern and brave temper.

The next evening, rather earlier, — at nightfall, — she was walking about the garden. In the midst of the confused thoughts which occupied her mind, she fancied that she heard for a moment a noise like that of the previous night, as if some one were walking in the gloom under the trees not far from her. But she said to herself that nothing so resembles the sound of a footfall on grass as the grating of two branches together, and she took no heed of it; besides, she saw nothing. She left the "thicket," and had a small grass-plat to cross before she reached the house. The moon, which had just risen behind her, threw her shadow in front of her upon the grass as she left the clump of bushes.

She stopped in terror.

Beside her shadow the moon distinctly traced upon

the grass another singularly startling and terrible shadow, — a shadow with a hat on its head. It was like the shadow of a man standing at the edge of the shrubbery a few paces behind her. For a moment she was unable to speak, or cry, or call out, or stir, or turn her head; but at last she collected all her courage and boldly turned round.

There was nobody.

She looked on the ground. The shadow had disappeared. She went back into the shrubbery, bravely searched in every corner, went as far as the gate, and discovered nothing. She shivered with fear. Was this another hallucination? What! two days in succession? One hallucination might pass, but two! The alarming point was, that the shadow was most certainly not a ghost. Ghosts never wear round hats.

Next day Jean Valjean returned. Cosette told him what she fancied she had seen and heard. She expected to be reassured, and that her father would shrug his shoulders and say: "You are a little goose."

Jean Valjean looked anxious.

"Perhaps it is nothing," he said to her. He left her on some excuse, and went into the garden, where she saw him examine the gate with considerable attention. In the night she woke up; this time she was sure, and she distinctly heard some one walking just under her windows. She ran to her shutter and opened it. There was really a man in the garden with a big stick in his hand. Just as she was going to cry out, the moon lit up the man's face, — it was her father. She went to bed again, saying: "He really seems very anxious!" Jean Valjean passed that night and the two following nights in the garden, and Cosette saw him through the hole in her shutter. On the third night the moon was on the wane, and rose later. At about one in the morning she

heard a hearty burst of laughter, and her father's voice calling her: —

"Cosette!"

She leaped out of bed, put on her dressing-gown, and opened her window; her father was standing on the grass-plat below.

"I have waked you to reassure you," he said; "look at this, — here 's your shadow in the round hat."

And he showed her on the grass a shadow cast by the moon, which really looked rather like the spectre of a man wearing a round hat. It was a shadow produced by a cast-iron chimney-pot with a cowl, which rose above an adjoining roof. Cosette also began to laugh; all her mournful suppositions disappeared, and the next morning at breakfast she made merry over the ill-omened garden, haunted by the ghosts of chimney-pots. Jean Valjean quite regained his ease; as for Cosette, she did not notice particularly whether the chimney-pot were really in the direction of the shadow which she had seen, or thought she had seen, and whether the moon were in the same part of the heavens. She did not cross-question herself as to the singularity of a chimney-pot which is afraid of being caught in the act, and retires when its shadow is looked at; for the shadow did retire when Cosette turned round, and she had fancied herself quite certain of this fact. Cosette was quite reassured, for the demonstration seemed to her perfect; and the thought that there could have been any one walking about the garden during the evening, or at night, went quite out of her head. A few days later, however, a fresh incident occurred.

CHAPTER III.

ENRICHED BY THE COMMENTS OF TOUSSAINT.

IN the garden, near the gate, looking out on the street, there was a stone bench, protected from the gaze of passers-by by a hedge; but it would have been an easy task to reach it by thrusting an arm through the gate and the hedge. One evening in this same month of April, Jean Valjean had gone out, and Cosette, after sunset, was seated on this bench. The wind blew fresh in the trees, and Cosette was reflecting; an objectless sorrow was gradually gaining on her, — the invincible sadness which night produces, and which comes perhaps (who knows?) from the mystery of the tomb which is yawning at the moment.

Possibly Fantine was in that shadow.

Cosette rose and went slowly round the garden, walking on the dew-laden grass, and saying to herself through the sort of melancholy somnambulism in which she was plunged: "I ought to have wooden shoes to walk in the garden at this hour; I shall catch cold." She returned to the bench, but just as she was going to sit down she noticed quite a large stone at the place where she had been sitting, which had surely not been there a moment before. Cosette looked at the stone, asking herself what it meant; all at once the idea that the stone had not reached the bench of itself, that some one had placed it there, and that an arm had been passed through the gate, occurred to her, and frightened her. This time it was a real fear, for

there was the stone. No doubt was possible; she did not touch it, but fled without daring to look behind her, sought refuge in the house, and at once shuttered, barred, and bolted the French window opening on the steps. Then she asked Toussaint: —

"Has my father come in?"

"No, miss."

(We have said once for all that Toussaint stammered, and we ask leave to omit it for the future, as we feel the musical notation of an infirmity to be repulsive.)

Jean Valjean, a thoughtful man, and given to strolls by night, often returned at a late hour.

"Toussaint," continued Cosette, "are you careful to put up the bars to the shutters opening on the garden, and to place the little iron things in the rings that close them?"

"Oh, I am sure I am, miss."

Toussaint never failed in her duty, and Cosette was well aware of the fact, but she could not refrain from adding: —

"For it is so lonely here."

"Well, that's true," said Toussaint; "we might be murdered before we had the time to say 'Oh!' And then, too, master does not sleep in the house. But don't be frightened, miss; I fasten up the windows like Bastilles. Lone women! I should think that was enough to make a body shudder. Only think! to see men coming into your bedroom and hear them say, 'Silence!' and then begin to cut your throat. It is not so much the dying, for everybody dies, and we know that we must do so, but it is the abomination of feeling those fellows touch you. And then their knives are not sharp, perhaps; Oh, Lord!"

"Hold your tongue!" said Cosette, "and fasten everything securely."

Cosette, terrified by the melodrama improvised by

Toussaint, and perhaps too by the thought of the apparitions of the past week, which returned to her mind, did not even dare to say to her: "Just go and look at the stone which some one has laid on the bench," for fear of having to open the garden gate again, and allowing "the men" to walk in. She had all the doors and windows carefully closed, made Toussaint examine the whole house from cellar to attic, locked herself in her bedroom, looked under the bed, and slept badly. All night long she saw that stone, as large as a mountain and full of caverns.

At sunrise, — it is a peculiarity of sunrise to make us laugh at all our terrors of the night, and our laughter is always in proportion to the fear we have felt, — at sunrise, Cosette, on waking, considered her terror as a nightmare, and said to herself: "What could I be thinking about? It was like the steps which I fancied I heard last week in the garden at night! It is like the shadow of the chimney-pot. Am I going to turn coward now?" The sun, which poured through the crevices in her shutters and made the damask curtains one mass of crimson, reassured her so fully that everything faded from her mind, even to the stone.

"There was no more a stone on the bench than there was a man in a round hat in the garden. I dreamed the stone, as I did the rest."

She dressed herself, went down into the garden, and felt a cold perspiration all over her, — the stone was there. But this only lasted for a moment. That which is terror by night is curiosity by day.

"Nonsense!" she said; "let us see what it is."

She raised the stone, which was of some size. There was something under it that resembled a letter. It was a white envelope. Cosette seized it; there was no address, and it was not sealed. Still, the envelope though open, was not empty; for papers could be seen inside. Cosette

examined it. She no longer suffered from terror, neither was it curiosity; it was incipient anxiety. She drew out the contents, — a little note-book, — each page of which was numbered and bore several lines written in a very delicate and rather pretty hand, so Cosette thought. She looked for a name, but there was none; for a signature, but there was none either. For whom was the packet intended? Probably for herself, as a hand had laid it on her bench. From whom did it come? An irresistible fascination seized upon her; she tried to turn her eyes away from the pages, which trembled in her hand. She looked at the sky, the street, the acacias all bathed in light, the pigeons circling round an adjoining roof, and then her eye settled on the manuscript, and she said to herself that she must know what was inside it. This is what she read: —

CHAPTER IV.

A HEART BENEATH A STONE.

THE reduction of the universe to a single being, the expansion of a single being into God, such is love.

Love is the salutation of the angels to the stars.

How sad the soul when it is sad through love.

What a void is the absence of the being who herself alone fills the world! Oh, how true it is that the beloved being becomes God! We might understand how God might be jealous, had not the Father of All evidently made creation for the soul, and the soul for love.

A smile half seen under a white crape bonnet with lilac strings is enough to lead the soul into the palace of dreams.

God is behind everything, but everything hides God. Things are black, creatures are opaque. To love a being is to render that being transparent.

Certain thoughts are prayers. There are moments when the soul kneels, no matter what the attitude of the body may be.

Parted lovers cheat absence by a thousand fanciful devices, which, however, have a reality of their own. They are prevented from seeing each other, and they cannot write, but they find a number of mysterious ways to correspond. They send each other the song of birds, the perfume of flowers, the laughter of children, the light of

the sun, the sighs of the breeze, the rays of the stars, and the whole of creation. And why not? All the works of God are made to serve love. Love is sufficiently powerful to charge all Nature with its messages.

O spring! thou art a letter which I write to her.

The future belongs to hearts even more than to minds. Love is the only thing which can occupy and fill eternity. The infinite requires the inexhaustible.

Love participates of the soul itself. It is of the same nature. Like it, it is the divine spark; like it, it is incorruptible, indivisible, and imperishable. It is a point of fire within us, which is immortal and infinite, which nothing can limit, and nothing extinguish; we feel it burning even in the marrow of our bones, and see it flashing in the very depths of heaven.

O love! adoration! ecstatic pleasure of two minds which comprehend each other, of two hearts which exchange with each other, of two glances that penetrate each other! You will come to me, O happiness, will you not? Walks with her in the solitudes! blessed and radiant days! I have sometimes dreamed that from time to time hours were detached from the lives of the angels, and came down here to traverse the destinies of men.

God can add nothing to the happiness of those who love, except to give them endless duration. After a life of love, an eternity of love is indeed an increase; but it is impossible even for God to increase in intensity the ineffable felicity which love gives to the soul in this world. God is the perfection of heaven; love is the perfection of man.

You gaze at a star for two reasons, — because it is luminous, and because it is impenetrable. You have beside you a sweeter radiance and a greater mystery, — woman.

All of us, whoever we may be, have our respirable beings. If they fail us, air fails us, and we stifle and die. To die for lack of love is frightful. It is the asphyxia of the soul.

When love has blended and mingled two beings in a sacred and angelic unity, they have found the secret of life; henceforth they are only the two terms of one and the same destiny, the two wings of one mind. Love and soar!

On the day when a woman who passes before you emits light as she walks, you are lost, for you love. From that moment there is but one thing for you to do, — to think of her so intently that she will be compelled to think of you.

What love begins can only be completed by God.

True love is in despair, and is enchanted over a lost glove or a found handkerchief; and it requires eternity for its devotion and its hopes. It is composed at once of the infinitely great and the infinitely little.

If you are a stone, be a magnet; if you are a plant, be the sensitive plant; if you are a man, be love.

Nothing suffices love. You have happiness, and you wish for paradise. You have paradise, and you crave for heaven. O ye who love each other, all this is contained in love. Learn to find it there. Love, as well as heaven, has contemplation, and what heaven has not, — raptures.

Does she still come to the Luxembourg? No, sir. — Does she attend Mass in that church? She goes there no longer. — Does she still live in this house? She has moved away. — Where has she gone? She did not leave her address.

What a sorry thing it is not to know where one's soul lives!

Love has its childishness; other passions have their pettinesses. Shame on the passions that belittle man! Honour to the one which makes a child of him!

It is a strange thing; did you know it? I dwell in darkness. There is a being who carried off heaven with her when she left me.

Oh, to lie side by side in the same tomb, hand in hand, and to gently touch a finger-tip from time to time in the darkness, would suffice for my eternity.

You who suffer because you love, love more than ever. To die of love is to live by it.

Love, a sombre, starry transfiguration, is mingled with this torment. There is ecstasy in the agony.

Oh, joy of birds! they sing because they have nests.

Love is a celestial breathing of the air of paradise.

Profound hearts, wise minds, take life as God makes it; it is a long trial, an unintelligible preparation for the unknown destiny. This destiny, the true one, begins for man with the first step inside the tomb. Then something appears to him, and he begins to distinguish the positive. The positive; reflect on that word. The living see the infinite, but the positive is seen by the dead alone. Meantime, love and suffer, hope and contemplate. Woe, alas! to the man who has loved bodies, shapes, and appearances only! Death will rob him of all. Try to love souls, and you will meet them again.

I met in the street a very poor young man who was in love. His hat was old, his coat worn, he was out at elbows, the water trickled through his shoes, and the stars through his soul.

What a grand thing it is to be loved! What a far grander thing to love! The heart becomes heroic by dint of passion. Henceforth it is composed of nought but what is pure; it rests only on that which is elevated and great. An unworthy thought can no more spring up in it than a nettle on a glacier. The serene and lofty soul, inaccessible to vulgar emotions and passions, soaring above the clouds and the shadows of this world, its follies, falsehoods, hatreds, vanities, and miseries, dwells in the blue of heaven, and henceforth feels only the profound and subterranean heavings of destiny, as the summits of mountains feel earthquakes.

If there were nobody who loved, the sun would become extinct.

CHAPTER V.

COSETTE AFTER THE LETTER.

AS Cosette, read these lines, she gradually fell into a revery; as she raised her eyes from the last page, the handsome officer passed triumphantly in front of the gate, for it was his hour. Cosette thought him hideous.

She again began to study the note-book. It was written in an exquisite hand, thought Cosette, all in the same hand, but with different inks, some very black, others pale, as when ink is added to the stand, and consequently on different days. It was, therefore, a thought unfolded on the paper, sigh by sigh, irregularly, without order, without choice, without purpose, accidentally. Cosette had never read anything like it. This manuscript, in which she saw even more light than obscurity, produced on her the effect of a half-open sanctuary. Each of these mysterious lines shone before her eyes, and flooded her heart with strange light. The education which she had received had always spoken to her of the soul, and never of love, — much as if a person were to speak of the burning log and say nothing about the flame. This manuscript of fifteen pages suddenly and sweetly revealed to her the whole of love, sorrow, destiny, life, eternity, — the beginning and the end. It was as if a hand had opened and suddenly flung her a handful of sun-beams. In these few lines she felt an impassioned, ardent, generous, and honest nature, a sacred will, an immense grief and an immense hope, a heavy heart, and a perfected ecstasy. What was this

manuscript? A letter. A letter without address, name, or signature, pressing and disinterested, an enigma composed of truths, a love-message fit to be borne by an angel and read by a virgin; a rendezvous appointed beyond the limits of earth, a love-letter written by a phantom to a shadow. Some absent one, calm and dejected, who seemed ready to seek a refuge in death, sent to his absent love the secret of destiny, the key of life, — love. It had been written with one foot in the grave and one finger in heaven. These lines, which had fallen one by one on the paper, were what might be called drops of the soul.

Now, from whom could these pages come? Who could have written them?

Cosette did not hesitate a moment, — from one man only; from *him!*

Daylight had returned to her mind, and everything reappeared. She felt an extraordinary joy and a profound agony. It was he! he who had written! He had been there! His arm had been thrust through the gate! While she forgot him, he had found her again! But had she forgotten him? No, never! She was mad to have thought so for a moment. She had always loved him, always adored him. The fire had been covered and had smouldered for a while; but, as she now plainly saw, it had but spread its ravages, and again burst forth and inflamed her whole being. This note-book was like a spark that had fallen from the other soul into hers. She felt the fire blazing up again.

She was deeply impressed by every word of the manuscript. "Oh, yes," she said to herself, "how well I recognize all that! I had read it all already in his eyes."

As she finished reading it for the third time, Lieutenant Théodule passed the gate once more, and clanked his spurs on the pavement. Cosette was obliged to raise her eyes. She thought him insipid, silly, stupid, useless,

fatuous, displeasing, impertinent, and very ugly. The officer thought himself bound to smile. She turned away, ashamed and indignant. She longed to throw something at his head. She ran away, re-entered the house, and locked herself in her bedroom, to re-read the manuscript, to learn it by heart, and to dream. When she had read it thoroughly, she kissed it, and hid it in her bosom.

All was over. Cosette had relapsed into profound, seraphic love; the abyss of Eden had again opened. All day long, Cosette was in a state of bewilderment. She hardly thought; her ideas were like a tangled skein in her brain; she could not succeed in forming any conjectures; she hoped, through her tremors, what? Vague things. She dared not promise herself anything, and she would not refuse herself anything. A pallor passed over her face, and a quiver over her limbs. At moments she fancied that it was all a chimera, and said to herself: "Is it real?" Then she felt the well-beloved paper under her dress, pressed it to her heart, felt the edges against her flesh; and if Jean Valjean had seen her at that moment, he would have shuddered at the luminous and strange joy which overflowed from her eyelids. "Oh, yes," she thought, "it is certainly he! This comes from him for me!" And she said to herself that an intervention of the angels, a celestial chance, had restored him to her.

Oh, transfiguration of love! oh, dreams! This celestial chance, this intervention of angels, was the ball of bread cast by one robber to another from the Charlemagne court-yard to the Lion's den over the roofs of La Force.

CHAPTER VI.

OLD PEOPLE ARE MADE TO GO OUT AT AN OPPORTUNE MOMENT.

WHEN night came, Jean Valjean went out; Cosette dressed herself. She arranged her hair in the way that best became her, and put on a dress whose body, having received one snip of the scissors too much, displayed through this opening her white throat, and was therefore, as girls say, "rather improper." It was not the least in the world improper, but it was prettier than any other style. She dressed herself in this way without knowing why.

Was she going out? No. Did she expect a visitor? No. She went down into the garden as it grew dark; Toussaint was engaged in her kitchen, which looked out on the backyard. Cosette began to walk about under the branches, pushing them aside now and then with her hand, as some were very low.

In this way she reached the bench. The stone was still there. She sat down and laid her soft white hand on the stone, as if to caress and thank it. All at once she had that indescribable feeling which people experience even without seeing, when some one is standing behind them. She turned her head and rose, — it was he. His head was bare; he seemed pale and thin, and his black clothes could scarcely be distinguished. The twilight blanched his fine forehead, and covered his eyes with shadows. Beneath a veil of incomparable gentleness,

there was something about him which suggested death and night. His face was lit up by the flush of departing day, and by the thoughts of an expiring soul.

He seemed as if he were not yet a spectre, but was no longer a man. His hat was thrown among the shrubs a few paces from him. Cosette, though ready to faint, did not utter a cry. She slowly retreated, for she felt herself attracted; but he did not stir. Through the ineffable sadness that enveloped him, she felt the look in his eyes, which she could not see. Cosette, in her retreat, came to a tree, and leaned against it. But for this tree, she would have fallen.

Then she heard his voice, — that voice which she had never really heard before, — scarce louder than the rustling of the foliage, as he murmured: —

"Pardon me for being here; my heart is full. I could not live as I was, and I have come. Have you read what I placed on that bench? Do you recognize me at all? Do not be afraid of me. Do you remember that day when you looked at me, now so long ago? It was in the Luxembourg garden, near the Gladiator. The days on which you passed before me were June 16 and July 2. It was nearly a year ago. I have not seen you for a very long time. I inquired of the woman who lets out chairs, and she said that you no longer came there. You lived in the Rue de l'Ouest, on the third-floor front of a new house, — you see that I know. I followed you, — what else could I do? — and then you disappeared. I thought that I saw you pass once, as I was reading the papers under the Odéon Arcade; I ran after you, — but no; it was a person wearing a bonnet like yours. At night I come here. Fear nothing, no one sees me; I come to gaze at your window. I walk very softly that you may not hear me, for you might be alarmed. The other evening I was behind you; you turned round, and I fled.

Once I heard you sing; I was happy. Do you care if I hear you sing through the shutters? That cannot harm you. No. You see you are my angel! Let me come now and then; I think that I am going to die. If you only knew how I adore you! But forgive me, I speak to you; I know not what I say. Perhaps I offend you — do I offend you?"

"Oh, my mother!" she said. And she sank down as if she were dying.

He seized her; she fell. He took her in his arms and pressed her to his heart, not knowing what he did. He supported her though himself tottering. He felt as if his head were full of smoke; lightning flashes darted between his lids; his ideas left him, and it seemed to him as if he were accomplishing some religious act, and yet committing a profanation. Moreover, he had not the least desire for this ravishing creature, whose form he felt upon his breast. He was distractedly in love.

She took his hand and laid it on her heart. He felt the paper there, and stammered: —

"You love me, then?"

She answered, in so low a voice that it was almost an inaudible breath: —

"Hush! You know I do." And she hid her blushing face on the breast of the proud and intoxicated young man.

He fell upon the bench, and she beside him. They no longer found words. The stars began to twinkle. How came it that their lips met? How comes it that the bird sings, the snow melts, the rose opens, May bursts into life, and the dawn grows white behind the black trees on the shuddering crest of the hills?

One kiss, and that was all.

Both trembled, and gazed at each other in the darkness with flashing eyes.

They felt neither the fresh night air nor the cold stone, nor the damp grass, nor the moist earth; they looked at each other, and their hearts were full of thoughts. They had clasped hands unconsciously.

She did not ask him, did not even wonder, how he had managed to enter the garden. It seemed to her so simple that he should be there. From time to time, Marius's knee touched Cosette's knee, and both quivered. At intervals, Cosette stammered a word; her soul trembled on her lips like the dew-drop on a flower.

Gradually they began to talk; effusion succeeded the silence which is plenitude. The night was serene and splendid overhead; and these two beings, pure as spirits, told each other everything, — their dreams, their intoxications, their ecstasies, their chimeras, their depressions, how they had adored each other from afar, and longed for each other, and their mutual despair when they ceased to meet. They confided to each other, in an ideal intimacy which nothing henceforth could increase, all their most hidden and mysterious thoughts. They told each other, with candid faith in their illusions, all that love, youth, and the remnant of childhood which was still theirs, suggested to their minds. Their two hearts were poured out to each other, so that at the end of an hour the young man had the maiden's soul, and the maiden his. They were mutually inter-penetrated, enchanted, and dazzled.

When they had finished, when they had told each other everything, she laid her head on his shoulder and asked him: —

"What is your name?"

"Marius," he said; "and yours?"

"Mine is Cosette."

BOOK VI.

LITTLE GAVROCHE.

CHAPTER I.

A MALICIOUS TRICK OF THE WIND.

SINCE 1823, while the public-house at Montfermeil was sinking, and was gradually being swallowed up, not in the abyss of bankruptcy, but in the cesspool of small debts, the Thénardiers had had two more children; both boys. This made five, two daughters and three sons. This was a good many.

The mother had got rid of the last two, while still babies, by a singular piece of good luck.

Got rid of, that is exactly the term, for in this woman there was only a fragment of nature, — a phenomenon, however, of which there is more than one instance. Like the Maréchale de Lamothe-Houdancourt, the Thénardier was a mother to her daughters only. Her maternity ended there. Her hatred of the human race began with her sons. On that side there was an abyss of cruelty, and her heart was terribly hard in that quarter. As we have seen, she detested the eldest; she execrated the other two. Why? Because she did. The most terrible of motives and most unanswerable of replies is, Because.

"I do not want a pack of squalling brats," this mother said.

Let us now explain how the Thénardiers managed to dispose of their last two children, and even to make a profit out of them.

The girl Magnon, to whom we referred some pages back, was the same who contrived to get an annuity out of old Gillenormand for her two children. She lived on the Quai des Celestins, at the corner of that ancient Rue du Petit-Musc, which has done all it could to change its bad reputation into a good odour. Our readers will remember the great croup epidemic which, thirty-five years ago, laid waste the banks of the Seine in Paris, and of which science took advantage to make experiments on a grand scale as to the efficacy of inhaling alum, for which the external application of tincture of iodine has been so usefully substituted in our day. In this epidemic, Magnon lost her two boys, who were still very young, on the same day, — one in the morning, the other in the evening. It was a blow. These children were precious to their mother; they represented eighty francs a month. These eighty francs were very punctually paid by the collector of M. Gillenormand's rents, a M. Barge, a retired tipstaff, who lived in the Rue de Sicile. The children once dead, the annuity was buried. Magnon sought an expedient. In that dark freemasonry of evil of which she formed a part, everything is known, all secrets are kept, and people help each other. Magnon wanted two children; Madame Thénardier had two of the same sex and age. It was a good arrangement for the one, and an excellent investment for the other. The little Thénardiers became little Magnons. Magnon left the Quai des Celestins and went to live in the Rue Cloche-Perce. In Paris, the identity which binds an individual to himself is broken by moving from one street to another.

The authorities, not being informed, made no objections, and the substitution was effected in the simplest way in the world. Thénardier, however, demanded for this loan of his children, ten francs a month, which Magnon promised, and even paid. We need not say that M. Gillenormand continued to fulfil his promise. He went every six months to see the children. He did not notice the change. "Oh, sir," Magnon would say to him, "how like you they are, to be sure!"

Thénardier, to whom avatars were an easy task, seized this opportunity to become Jondrette. His two daughters and Gavroche had scarcely had time to perceive that they had two little brothers. When a certain stage of misery is reached, people are affected by a sort of spectral indifference, and regard human beings as ghosts. Your nearest relatives are often no more to you than vague shadowy forms, hardly to be distinguished from the nebulous background of life, and easily confounded with the invisible. On the evening of the day when Mother Thénardier handed over her two babes to Magnon, with the express intention of renouncing them forever, she felt, or pretended to feel, a scruple. She said to her husband: "Why, this is deserting our children!" But Thénardier, magisterial and phlegmatic, cauterized the scruple with this remark: "Jean Jacques Rousseau did better!" From scruples the mother passed to anxiety: "But suppose the police were to trouble us? Tell me, Monsieur Thénardier, whether what we have done is allowable?" Thénardier replied: "Everything is allowable. It is all serene. Besides, no one has any interest in inquiring closely after children that have not a cent."

Magnon was a sort of leader of fashion in the world of crime. She dressed handsomely. She shared her rooms, which were furnished in an affected and miserable way, with a very clever Frenchified English thief. This

Englishwoman, a naturalized Parisian, recommended by very wealthy connections, closely connected with the medals of the Library and the diamonds of Mademoiselle Mars, was at a later date celebrated in the annals of crime; she was called *Mamselle Miss.*

The two little ones who had fallen into Magnon's clutches had no cause to complain. Recommended by the eighty francs, they were taken care of, like everything which brings in a profit: they were not badly clothed, not badly fed, treated almost like "little gentlemen," and better off with their false mother than with the real one. Magnon played the lady, and never talked slang in their presence. They spent several years thus, and Thénardier augured well of it. One day he happened to say to Magnon as she handed him the monthly ten francs: "The 'father' must give them an education."

All at once, these two poor children, hitherto tolerably well protected, even by their evil destiny, were suddenly hurled into life, and forced to begin it for themselves. A wholesale arrest of criminals, like that in the Jondrette garret, being necessarily complicated with researches and subsequent incarcerations, is a veritable disaster for that hideous and occult counter-society which lives beneath general society; an adventure of this nature entails all sorts of convulsions in that gloomy world. The catastrophe of the Thénardiers involved the catastrophe of Magnon.

One day, shortly after Magnon had given Eponine the note relating to the Rue Plumet, the police made a sudden descent on the Rue Cloche-Perce; Magnon was arrested, as was Mamselle Miss; and all the inhabitants of the house who were suspected were hauled into the net. The two little boys were playing at the time in the backyard, and saw nothing of the raid; but when they tried to go in, they found the door locked and the house empty.

A cobbler, whose stall was opposite, called to them and gave them a paper which "their mother" had left for them. On this paper was the address, "M. Barge, collector of rents, No. 8, Rue du Roi de Sicile." The cobbler said to them: "You no longer live here. Go there. It is close by, — the first street on your left. Ask your way with that paper." The boys set off, the elder leading the younger, and holding in his hand the paper which was to serve as their guide. It was cold, and his numbed little fingers could not close firmly and had a bad hold on the paper. At the corner of the Rue Cloche-Perce a puff of wind tore it from him; and as night was falling, the boy could not find it again. They began to wander aimlessly about the streets.

CHAPTER II.

LITTLE GAVROCHE TURNS NAPOLEON THE GREAT TO GOOD ACCOUNT.

SPRING in Paris is very frequently traversed by sharp, piercing breezes, which, if they do not freeze, chill; these breezes, which sadden the brightest days, produce exactly the same effect as those blasts of cold wind which enter a warm room through the crevices of a badly fitting door or window. It seems as if the gloomy gate of winter had been left ajar, and as if the wind pushed through it. In the spring of 1832, the period when the first great epidemic of this century broke out in Europe, these breezes were sharper and more cutting than ever. Some door even more icy than that of winter, had been left ajar. It was the door of the sepulchre. The breath of cholera could be felt in those breezes. From a meteorological point of view, these cold winds had this peculiarity, that they did not preclude a strong electric tension. Frequent storms, accompanied by thunder and lightning, broke out at this time.

One evening when these breezes were blowing sharply, so sharply that January seemed to have returned, and people had put on their cloaks again, little Gavroche, still shivering gayly under his rags, was standing as if in ecstasy in front of a hair-dresser's shop in the vicinity of the Orme-St. Gervais. He was adorned with a woman's woollen shawl, picked up no one knows where, of which he had made a muffler. Little Gavroche appeared to be lost in admiration of a waxen image of a bride, in a very low-necked dress, with a wreath of orange-flowers in her hair, which revolved in the window between two lamps, and lavished its smiles on the passers-by; but in reality he was watching the shop to see whether he could not "bone" a cake of soap, which he would afterward sell for a sou to a barber in the suburbs. He frequently breakfasted on one of these cakes; he called this style of work, for which he had a talent, "shaving the barber." As he gazed at the bride, and cast sheeps'-eyes at the cake of soap, he muttered between his teeth, "Tuesday; this is not Tuesday. Is it Tuesday? Perhaps it is Tuesday; yes, it is Tuesday." What this soliloquy referred to was never known; but if, perchance, it was to the last time he had dined, it was three days ago, for the present day was a Friday. The barber in his shop, warmed by a good stove, was shaving a customer, and taking every now and then a side glance at his enemy, that shivering and impudent urchin, both of whose hands were in his pockets, but whose mind was evidently ready for anything.

While Gavroche was examining the bride, the window, and the Windsor soap, two boys of unequal height, very decently dressed, and younger than himself, one apparently seven, the other five years of age, timidly turned the handle and entered the shop, asking for something or other — charity possibly — in a plaintive murmur, which was more like a groan than a prayer. They both spoke

at once, and their words were unintelligible, because sobs choked the voice of the younger boy, and cold made the teeth of the elder chatter. The barber turned with a furious face, and, without laying down his razor, drove one into the street with his left hand, the other with his knee, and closed the door again, saying: —

"The idea of coming in and freezing everybody for nothing!"

The two lads set out again, crying. A cloud had come up in the mean while, and it began to rain. Little Gavroche ran after them, and accosted them thus: —

"What 's the matter with you, brats?"

"We don't know where to sleep," the elder replied.

"Is that all?" said Gavroche; "that 's not worth crying about. What babes in the wood you must be!" and assuming a tone of tender affection and gentle protection, in spite of his somewhat pompous superiority, he said: —

"Come with me, kids!"

"Yes, sir," said the elder boy.

And the two children followed him as they might have followed an archbishop. They had left off crying. Gavroche led them along the Rue St. Antoine, in the direction of the Bastille, and as he went, he cast an indignant and retrospective glance at the barber's shop.

"That cad has no heart," he growled; "he 's a blockhead!"

A girl, seeing the three marching in file, Gavroche at the head, burst into a loud laugh. This laugh was disrespectful to the party.

"Good-day, Mamselle Omnibus," said Gavroche to her.

A moment after, the hair-dresser returning to his mind, he added: —

"I made a mistake about the brute; he is not a cad, but a snake. Barber, I 'll go and fetch a locksmith, and order him to hang a bell on your tail."

This barber had made him aggressive. As he stepped across a gutter, he addressed a bearded portress, worthy to meet Faust on the Brocken, and who had her broom in her hand: —

"I say, madame," said he, "are you going out with your horse?"

And upon this, he splashed the polished boots of a passer-by.

"Scoundrel!" cried the furious gentleman. Gavroche put his nose out of the shawl.

"Have you any complaint to make, sir?"

"Yes, of you," said the gentleman.

"The office is closed," remarked Gavroche. "I receive no more complaints to-day."

As he went along the street he caught sight of a beggar-girl thirteen or fourteen years old, shivering in a gateway, dressed in such short petticoats that she showed her knees. The little girl was getting to be too tall for that sort of thing. Growth plays these tricks. The petticoat becomes short just when nudity begins to be indecent.

"Poor girl!" said Gavroche, "she has n't even a pair of breeches. Here, take this."

And unwinding all the good woollen which he had round his neck, he threw it over the thin, purple shoulders of the beggar-girl, where the muffler became a shawl once more. The little girl gazed at him in astonishment, and received the shawl in silence. At a certain stage of distress, a poor man, in his stupor, no longer groans over his misery, and returns no thanks for kindness.

This done: —

"B–r–r!" said Gavroche, shivering more than Saint Martin, who, at any rate, retained one-half his cloak. At this *b–r–r*, the shower, redoubling its rage, poured down in torrents. Thus wicked skies punish good actions.

"Hullo!" shouted Gavroche; "what's the meaning of this? It is raining again. Good gracious! if this goes on I shall stop my subscription."

And he set out again.

"No matter," he said, as he glanced at the beggar-girl curled up under the shawl; "she's got a first-rate peel."

And, looking up at the clouds, he cried, "Sold, you are!"

The two children limped after him, and as they passed one of those thick, closely grated windows which indicate a baker's shop (for bread, like gold, is put behind bars), Gavroche turned round: —

"By the bye, brats, have you dined?"

"We have had nothing to eat, sir, since this morning," the elder answered.

"Then you have neither father nor mother," Gavroche continued, majestically.

"I beg your pardon, sir; we have a papa and a mamma, but we don't know where they are."

"Sometimes that is better than knowing," said Gavroche, who was a philosopher in his small way.

"We have been walking about for two hours," continued the lad; "we have looked for things at every street corner, but we have found nothing."

"I know," said Gavroche; "the dogs eat everything."

He resumed after a pause: —

"And so we have lost the authors of our being. We don't know what we have done with them. That is n't the right thing, brats. You ought not turn grown-up people loose like that. Well, I suppose I must find you a shake-down."

He asked them no more questions. What could be more simple than to have no home? The elder of the boys, who had almost entirely recovered the happy care-

Gavroche and the Children in the Bakery.

Etched by R. de Los Rios. – Painted by Francois Flameng.

lessness of childhood, made this remark: "It is funny, for all that; for mamma said she would take us to get some palms on Palm Sunday."

"Stuff!" replied Gavroche.

"Mamma," resumed the child, "is a lady who lives with Mamselle Miss."

"I believe you!" exclaimed Gavroche.

He stopped, and for some minutes searched every corner in his rags. At length he raised his head with an air which was only intended to express satisfaction, but which was in reality triumphant.

"Be calm, kids. Here's supper for three." And he drew a sou from one of his pockets.

Without giving the little ones time to feel amazed, he pushed them both before him into the baker's shop, and laid his sou on the counter, exclaiming: —

"Boy! five centimes' worth of bread."

The baker, who was the master in person, took up a loaf and a knife.

"In three pieces, my boy," remarked Gavroche. He added with dignity: "We are three."

And seeing that the baker, after examining the three customers, had taken up a loaf of black bread, he thrust his finger into his nose, with as imperious a sniff as if he had the great Frederick's pinch of snuff on the end of his thumb, and flung full in the baker's face, this indignant remark: —

"What are you giving us?" (*Keksekça?*)

"Why, it is bread; very good seconds bread."

"You mean wretched tommy," retorted Gavroche, with calm and cold disdain. "White bread, my lad; I'm standing treat."

The baker could not help smiling; and while he cut some white bread, he surveyed them in a compassionate way, which offended Gavroche.

"Well, baker's boy!" said he, "what are you sizing us up in that way for?"

All three of them, put end to end, would not have sized up six feet.

When the bread was cut, the baker put the sou in the till, and Gavroche said to the two boys: —

"Grub away."

The little boys looked at him in surprise. Gavroche burst into a laugh.

"Oh, yes, that's true; they don't understand yet, they are so little." And he continued: "Eat."

At the same time he offered each of them a bit of bread. Thinking that the elder, who appeared to him more worthy of his conversation, merited some special encouragement, and ought to be relieved of any hesitation about satisfying his hunger, he added, as he gave him the larger lump: —

"Shove that into your potato-trap."

One piece was smaller than the other two; he took that for himself. The poor boys, Gavroche included, were starving; as they devoured the bread, they blocked up the baker's shop, who, now that he was paid, looked at them angrily.

"Let us go back to the street," said Gavroche.

They set off again in the direction of the Bastille. From time to time, as they passed lighted shop-windows, the younger boy stopped to see what o'clock it was by a leaden watch hung round his neck by a string.

"Well, he is a booby," said Gavroche. Then he growled thoughtfully, between his teeth; "No matter; if I had brats of my own, I would take better care of them than that."

As they were finishing their bread, they reached the corner of that gloomy Rue de Ballets, at the end of which the low and threatening wicket of La Force is visible.

"Hullo, is that you, Gavroche?" said some one.

"Hullo, is that you, Montparnasse?" said Gavroche.

It was a man who accosted Gavroche, no other than Montparnasse in disguise, with blue spectacles, but recognizable by Gavroche.

"My eye!" Gavroche went on, "you 've got a hide the colour of a linseed poultice and blue spectacles like a doctor. You 're putting on style, on the word of an old man!"

"Hush!" said Montparnasse; "not so loud."

And he hurriedly dragged Gavroche out of the light of the shops.

The two little boys followed mechanically, holding each other by the hand.

When they were under the black arch of a gate-way, protected from eyes and rain, Montparnasse remarked:

"Do you know where I am going?"

"To the abbey of Mount-with-regret," [1] said Gavroche.

"Joker!" And Montparnasse added: "I am going to look for Babet."

"Ah!" said Gavroche, "so her name is Babet, is it?"

Montparnasse lowered his voice.

"Not she — he."

"I thought he was buckled up."

"He has unfastened the buckle," replied Montparnasse.

And he hurriedly told the boy that, on that very morning, Babet, while being transferred to the Conciergerie, escaped by turning to the left instead of the right in the "police office passage."

Gavroche admired his skill.

"What a dentist!" he cried.

Montparnasse added a few details about Babet's escape, and ended with: "Oh, that is not all."

Gavroche, as he listened, had seized a cane which

[1] The scaffold.

Montparnasse held in his hand: he mechanically pulled at the upper part, and a dagger-blade appeared.

"Ah!" said he, thrusting the dagger back quickly, "you have brought along your policeman with you disguised as a civilian."

Montparnasse winked.

"The deuce!" exclaimed Gavroche; "are you going to have a turn-up with the cops?"

"There's no knowing," Montparnasse answered, carelessly. "It's always as well to have a pin about you."

Gavroche persisted: —

"What are you going to do to-night?"

Montparnasse again became serious, and said, mincing his words: —

"Things." And suddenly changing the conversation: "By the bye —"

"What?"

"Something that happened the other day. Just fancy. I meet an old shopkeeper. He makes me a present of a sermon and his purse. I put it in my pocket. A moment later I feel in my pocket. There is nothing there."

"Except the sermon," said Gavroche.

"But where are you going now?" Montparnasse continued.

Gavroche pointed to his two protégés, and said: —

"I am going to put these two children to bed."

"To bed? Where?"

"At my house."

"Where is your house?"

"At home."

"So you have lodgings?"

"Yes, I have lodgings."

"And where are your lodgings?"

"Inside the elephant," said Gavroche.

Montparnasse, though not naturally disposed to astonishment, could not refrain from the exclamation: —

"Inside the elephant!"

"Why, yes; inside the elephant!" repeated Gavroche. "What's the matter with that?"

The gutter-snipe's profound remark restored Montparnasse's composure and good sense. He seemed to entertain a better opinion of Gavroche's lodgings.

"Ah, yes," he said; "elephant. Is it comfortable there?"

"Very," replied Gavroche. "Nobby. There are no draughts as there are under the bridges."

"How do you get in?"

"Oh, I get in."

"Then there is a hole?" asked Montparnasse.

"I should say so! But don't tell anybody. It's between the front legs. The reelers don't know it."

"And you climb up? Yes, I understand."

"One turn of your hand, cric crac, it's done, nobody there."

After a pause Gavroche added: —

"I shall have to contrive a ladder for these young ones."

Montparnasse began to laugh.

"Where the devil did you pick up those brats?'

Gavroche answered with great simplicity: —

"A barber made me a present of them."

Meanwhile, Montparnasse had become thoughtful.

"You recognized me very readily," he muttered.

He took from his pocket two small objects, which were nothing but quills wrapped in cotton, and thrust one into each nostril. This made him quite a different nose.

"That changes you," said Gavroche; "you are not so ugly now, and you ought to keep them in for good."

Montparnasse was a handsome fellow, but Gavroche was fond of a joke.

"Without any humbug," asked Montparnasse; "what do you think of me now?"

The sound of his voice was wholly different also. In the twinkling of an eye Montparnasse had become unrecognizable.

"Oh, do play Punch and Judy for us!" exclaimed Gavroche.

The two little boys, who had not been listening up to this moment, engaged as they themselves were in thrusting their fingers up their noses, drew nearer on hearing these words, and gazed at Montparnasse with incipient joy and admiration.

Unluckily, Montparnasse was in no humour for jesting.

He laid his hand on Gavroche's shoulder, and said, emphasizing every word: —

"Listen to what I tell you, boy; if I were on the square with my dog, my knife, and my wife, and you were to lavish ten double sous on me, I would not refuse to work, but this is not Shrove Tuesday." [1]

This strange sentence produced a singular effect on the urchin; he turned round sharply, glanced all about with his bright little eyes and saw a policeman a few yards off with his back turned to them. Gavroche let an "all right" slip from him, which he at once repressed, and shook Montparnasse's hand.

"Well, good-night," he said; "I am off to my elephant with my brats. Should you happen to want me any night, you 'll find me there. I lodge on the second floor. There 's no porter. Ask for Monsieur Gavroche."

"All right," said Montparnasse.

[1] Ecoute ce que je te dis, garçon; si j'étais sur la place, avec mon dogue, ma dague, et ma digue, et si vous me prodiguiez dix gros sous, je ne refuserais d'y goupiner, mais nous ne sommes pas le Mardi-gras.

And they parted, Montparnasse going toward the Grève, and Gavroche toward the Bastille. The little five-year-old boy, dragged along by his brother, whom Gavroche dragged along in his turn, looked round several times to watch "Punch and Judy."

The nonsensical sentence by means of which Montparnasse warned Gavroche of the presence of the policeman, contained no other talisman but the sound *dig* repeated five or six times under various forms. This syllable, not pronounced separately, but artistically mingled with the words of a sentence, means: "Take care, we cannot speak freely." There was also in Montparnasse's remark a literary beauty which escaped Gavroche's notice, that is, "mon dogue, ma dague, et ma digue," — a bit of the Temple, slang, meaning "my dog, my knife, and my wife," greatly in use among rufflers and slashers of the great age in which Molière wrote and Callot drew.

Twenty years back, there might still have been seen in the south-eastern corner of the square of the Bastille, near the canal dock, dug in the old moat of the citadel prison, a quaint monument, which has already been effaced from the memory of Parisians, and which should have left some trace, as it was an idea of the "member of the Institute, commander-in-chief of the army of Egypt." We say monument, though it was only a rough model; but this model itself, a prodigious sketch, the grand skeleton of an idea of Napoleon, which successive gusts of wind have carried away, each time bearing it farther from us, had become historic, and assumed a certain definite aspect in strong contrast with its temporary appearance. It was an elephant, forty feet high, made of lath and plaster, bearing on its back a castle which resembled a house, once painted green by some dauber, and now painted black by heaven, the rain, and time. In this deserted and unprotected corner of the square the broad

brow of the colossus, its trunk, its tusks, its castle, its enormous back, and its four feet like columns, cast at night a surprising and terrible shadow against the starlit sky. No one knew what it meant. It seemed a sort of symbol of the popular strength. It was gloomy, mysterious, and immense. It looked like a powerful visible phantom standing erect beside the invisible spectre of the Bastille.

Few strangers visited this structure, and no passer-by looked at it. It was falling into ruins; and every season plaster becoming detached from its flanks made horrible scars upon it. The "ediles," as they were called in the fashionable slang, had forgotten it since 1814; there it stood in its corner, melancholy, sickly, crumbling away, surrounded by rotting palings, which were sullied every moment by drunken drivers. There were yawning cracks in its stomach, a lath projected from its tail; tall grass grew between its legs; and as the level of the square had risen all around it for the last thirty years, by that slow and continuous movement which insensibly lifts the soil of great cities, it stood in a hollow, and it seemed as if the earth were giving way beneath it. It was unclean, despised, repulsive, and superb; ugly in the eyes of Philistines, but melancholy in the eyes of the thinker. It had something about it of the dirt which is to be swept away, and something of the majesty which is to be decapitated.

As we said, at night its appearance changed. Night is the true medium for everything that is shadowy. So soon as twilight set in the old elephant was transfigured; it assumed a placid and redoubtable appearance in the formidable serenity of darkness. As it belonged to the past, it belonged to night; and this obscurity suited its grandeur.

This monument, rude, squat, heavy, rough, austere,

almost shapeless, but most assuredly majestic, marked by a sort of magnificent and savage gravity, has disappeared and left to reign in peace the sort of gigantic stove, adorned with its stove-pipe, which was substituted for the frowning fortress with its nine towers, much as the middle classes are substituted for the feudal classes. It is very natural that a stove should be the symbol of an epoch in which a stew-pan contains power. This period will pass away, — it is already passing away. People are beginning to understand that if there may be strength in a boiler, there can only be power in a brain; in other words, that which leads and guides the world is not locomotives but ideas. Harness locomotives to ideas, and then it is all right; but do not take the horse for the rider.

However this may be, to return to the Bastille square, the architect of the elephant managed to produce something grand with plaster, while the architect of the stove-pipe has succeeded in making something little out of bronze.

This stove-pipe, which was christened by a sonorous name, and called the Column of July, this ineffectual monument of an abortive revolution, was still wrapped up, in 1832, in a vast shirt of wood-work, which we, for our part, regret, and in a vast enclosure of planks, which completed the isolation of the elephant. It was to this corner of the square, faintly lighted by the reflection of a distant street-lamp, that the gutter-snipe led his two "kids."

Allow us to interrupt our narrative here and to remind our readers that we are dealing with simple reality, and that twenty years ago a boy who was caught sleeping inside the elephant of the Bastille was actually brought before the police on the charge of vagabondage and mutilation of a public monument.

As they drew near the colossus, Gavroche understood

the effect which the infinitely great might produce on the infinitely little, and said: —

"Don't be frightened, brats."

Then he crawled through a hole in the fence into the elephant's enclosure, and helped the children to pass through the breach. The little boys, somewhat alarmed, followed Gavroche without a word, confiding in this small Providence in rags, who had given them bread and promised them a bed. A ladder which was used during the day by the workmen in a timber-yard close by, lay at full length along the palings; Gavroche raised it with remarkable energy, and placed it against one of the elephant's fore legs. At the point where the ladder ended a sort of black hole could be distinguished in the belly of the colossus. Gavroche showed the ladder and the hole to his guests, and said: "Go up, and go in." The two little boys looked at each other in terror.

"You are frightened, brats!" Gavroche exclaimed, and added: "I 'll show you."

He clasped the elephant's wrinkled foot, and in a twinkling, without deigning to make use of the ladder, he had reached the hole. He entered it as a lizard glides into a crevice, and plunged in; a moment later the two boys saw his head appear vaguely, like a pale whitish patch, at the edge of the hole, which was full of darkness.

"Well," he cried, "come up, my blessed babes. You will see how snug it is! Come up, you," he said to the elder. "I will lend you a hand."

The little boys nudged each other, for the urchin at once frightened and reassured them, and then it was raining very hard. The elder boy ventured, and the younger, seeing his brother ascending, and himself left alone between the feet of this great beast, felt greatly inclined to cry, but did not dare. The elder climbed up

the rungs of the ladder in a very uncertain way; as he did so Gavroche encouraged him with exclamations like a fencing-master addressing his pupils, or a muleteer his mules: —

"Don't be frightened! That's it! keep on moving! set your foot there!— now, give us your hand, — bravo!"

And when the boy was within reach, Gavroche seized him quickly and vigorously by the arm, and drew him to him.

"I've got you!" he said.

The brat had crawled through the crevice.

"Now," said Gavroche, "wait for me. Pray sit down, sir."

And leaving the hole in the same way that he entered it, he slid down the elephant's leg with the agility of a monkey, fell on his feet in the grass, grasped the five-year-old boy by the waist and planted him in the very middle of the ladder; then he began to ascend behind him, shouting to the older boy: —

"I'll push him, and you must pull him."

In a second, the little fellow was pushed, dragged, pulled, drawn, stuffed and thrust through the hole before he knew where he was, and Gavroche, entering after him, kicked away the ladder, which fell in the grass, and clapped his hands as he shouted: "There we are! Long live General Lafayette!" This explosion over, he added: "Brats, you are in my house."

Gavroche was, in fact, at home. Oh, unexpected utility of the useless! Oh, charity of the great! Oh, goodness of giants! This huge monument, which had embodied the idea of an emperor, had become the lodging of a street urchin; the brat was accepted and sheltered by the colossus. The shop-keepers in Sunday best, who passed the elephant of the Bastille, were wont to say, as they measured it with a contemptuous look of their prominent eyes:

"What's the use of that?" Its use was to save from cold, from frost, from rain and hail, to protect from the winter wind, to preserve from sleeping in the mud, which brings on fever, and from sleeping in the snow, which causes death, a little fatherless and motherless boy, without bread, clothes, or home. It served to shelter the innocent boy whom society rejected. It served to diminish public wrong. It was a lair opened to one against whom all doors were closed. It seemed as if the wretched old mastodon, invaded by vermin and oblivion, covered with warts, mould, and ulcers, tottering, crumbling, abandoned, and condemned, a sort of colossal mendicant asking in vain the alms of a friendly glance in the midst of the highway, had taken pity on this other beggar, the poor pygmy who walked about without shoes to his feet, without a roof over his head, blowing on his fingers to keep them warm, dressed in rags, and fed on what others threw away. This is what the elephant of the Bastille was good for. This idea of Napoleon, disdained by men, was taken up again by God. That which was only illustrious, had become august. The emperor required to realize his idea, porphyry, bronze, iron, gold, and marble; but for God that old collection of planks, beams, and plaster was sufficient. The emperor had the dream of a genius; in that Titanic elephant, armed, prodigious, with uplifted trunk, bearing its tower and spouting glad, living waters all around, he wished to incarnate the people. God made a greater thing of it. He lodged a child in it.

The hole by which Gavroche entered was a breach scarce visible from the outside, concealed, as we said, under the elephant's belly, and so narrow that only cats and boys could crawl through it.

"Let us begin," said Gavroche, "by telling the porter that we are not at home."

And plunging into the darkness with the assurance of a man who knows every corner of his apartment, he took a board and stopped up the hole.

Again he plunged into the darkness. The children heard the fizzing of a match as it was dipped into the bottle of phosphorus; for chemical matches did not yet exist, — the Fumade flint and steel represented progress at that day.

A sudden light made them blink; Gavroche had lighted one of those bits of rope dipped in pitch which are called "cellar rats." This thing, which gave more smoke than light, rendered the inside of the elephant indistinctly visible.

Gavroche's two guests looked about them, and felt much as any one might feel if shut up in the Heidelberg tun, or, better still, as Jonah must have felt in the biblical belly of the whale. An entire and gigantic skeleton was visible to them and enveloped them. Above their heads a long, brown beam, from which sprang at regular intervals massive arches, represented the spine with the ribs; stalactites of plaster hung down like viscera, and vast spider-webs stretching from one side to the other, formed dusty diaphragms. Here and there in the corners were large black spots which seemed to be alive, and which changed places rapidly, with a quick and startled movement. Fragments which had fallen from the elephant's back into its belly had filled up the cavity, so that it was possible to walk on it as on a floor.

The smaller child nudged his brother, and whispered:

"It is black."

This remark led Gavroche to protest. The petrified air of the two children rendered some shock necessary.

"What are you giving us?" he shouted. "None of that nonsense! You 'd turn up your noses, would you? Do you want the whole earth? Are you noblemen's sons?

If you are, say so ; but I warn you that I 'm not a fellow to put up with any humbug. Come now, to hear you talk one would think that you belonged to the Pope's own establishment ! "

A little scolding is a good cure for fright. It is reassuring. The two children drew nearer to Gavroche, who, paternally moved by this confidence, passed from sternness to gentleness, and addressing the smaller one, said : —

" You little goose," — toning down the insult with a caressing inflection of voice, — " it is outside that it 's black. Outside it rains, here it does not rain ; outside it is cold, here there is not a breath of wind ; outside there are heaps of people, here there 's nobody ; outside there 's not even the moon, and here there 's a candle, bully boy."

The two children looked about the apartment with less terror, but Gavroche allowed them no more leisure for contemplation.

" Quick," said he. And he thrust them toward what we are very happy to be able to call the end of the room.

His bed was here.

Gavroche's bed was complete, — that is to say, it had a mattress, a coverlet, and an alcove with curtains. The mattress was a straw mat, and the coverlet was a big enough quilt, of coarse, gray wool, very warm, and nearly new. This is what the alcove was : —

Three long props driven securely into the rubbish which formed the floor, — that is to say, the elephant's belly, — two in front and one behind, and fastened by a rope at the top, so as to form a hollow pyramid. This pyramid supported a brass wire netting simply laid upon it, but artistically applied and fastened with iron wire, so that it entirely surrounded the three poles. A row of large stones held the netting to the ground, so that nothing

could pass under it. This netting was merely a piece of the brass-work with which aviaries are covered in menageries. Gavroche's bed stood under this screen as in a cage. The whole thing looked like an Esquimau's tent.

This netting did duty for curtains.

Gavroche moved aside the stones that held down the netting in front, and the two folds which lapped over each other fell apart.

"Down on all fours, kids!" said Gavroche.

He made his guests enter the cage cautiously, then went in after them, brought the stones together again, and carefully closed the opening. All three stretched out on the mat.

Short as they all were, not one of them could stand upright in the alcove. Gavroche still held the "cellar rat" in his hand.

"Now," he said, "to roost; I am going to suppress the chandelier."

"What is that, sir?" the elder of the brothers asked Gavroche, pointing to the brass netting.

"That," said Gavroche gravely, "is on account of the rats. Go to roost!"

Still he felt obliged to add a few words for the instruction of those young creatures, and he added:—

"It comes from the Jardin des Plantes. It is used for wild beasts. There is a whole shop-full of it there. All you have to do is to climb over a wall, crawl through a window, and go under a door. You can get as much as you like."

As he spoke, he wrapped a corner of the quilt about the little boy, who murmured:—

"Oh, that is nice! It 's so warm!"

Gavroche cast a satisfied eye at the quilt.

"That comes from the Jardin des Plantes, too," he said. "I took it from the monkeys."

And pointing out to the elder one the straw mat on which he was lying, which was very thick and well made, he added: —

"That belonged to the giraffe."

After a pause, he continued: —

"The beasts had all these things. I took them from them. They were not at all angry. I told them that I wanted them for the elephant."

There was another interval of silence, after which he continued: —

"You climb over walls and you laugh at the government. That's the racket."

The two children gazed with timid and stupefied respect at this intrepid and inventive being, a vagabond like themselves, isolated like themselves, puny like themselves, who had something wonderful and omnipotent about him, who appeared to them supernatural, and whose face was made up of all the grimaces of an old mountebank, mingled with the simplest and most charming of smiles.

"Then, sir," the elder lad ventured timidly, "you are not afraid of the police?"

Gavroche contented himself with answering: —

"Brat! you must n't say 'police,' you must say 'cops.'"

The little one stared, but said nothing. As he was at the edge of the mat, the elder being in the centre, Gavroche tucked in the coverlet round him as a mother might have done, and raised the mat under his head with old rags, so as to make him a pillow. Then he turned to the elder boy: —

"Well, it is jolly comfortable here, eh?"

"Oh, yes!" answered the lad, looking at Gavroche with the expression of a rescued cherub.

The two poor little fellows, who were wet through, began to grow warm again.

"By the bye," Gavroche went on, "what were you blubbering about?"

And, pointing to the younger boy, he said to the brother: —

"A kid like that, I don't say no; but for a tall chap like you to cry, — why, it is idiotic. You looked like a stuck pig."

"Well, sir," said the child, "we had n't any house to go to."

"Brat," remarked Gavroche, "you must n't say 'house,' but 'ken.'"

"And then we felt afraid to be all alone like that in the night."

"Don't say 'night,' say 'gropus.'"

"Thank you, sir," said the boy.

"Listen to me," Gavroche went on. "You must never blubber again over anything. I'll take care of you. You'll see what fun we shall have. In summer we'll go to the Glacière with Navet, a pal of mine; we'll bathe in the dock, and run about stark naked on the rafts in front of the bridge of Austerlitz, for that puts the washerwomen in a rage. They yell, they kick; Lord! if you only knew how ridiculous they are. We'll go and see the living skeleton; he's all alive at the Champs Elysées. He's as thin as anything, that cove is. And then I will take you to the play. I'll take you to see Frederick Lemaître. I get tickets, for I know some actors; and indeed I acted myself once in a piece. There were a lot of us boys, and we ran about under a canvas, and that made the sea. I will get you an engagement at my theatre. We will go and see the savages. They ain't real savages, those ain't. They wear pink fleshings which are all wrinkled, and you can see where their elbows are mended with white thread. And then we will go to the opera. We'll get in with the men that are hired to clap. They

are a very swell lot at the opera. I would n't care to be seen with those they have at the boulevard theatres. At the opera, just fancy, some of them pay twenty sous; but they are asses. Folks call them 'red rags.' And then we will go and see a man guillotined. I 'll show you the executioner. He lives in the Rue de Marais. His name 's Sanson. He 's got a letter-box at his door. Oh, we will have fine fun!"

At this moment a drop of pitch fell on Gavroche's finger, and recalled him to the realities of life.

"The devil!" said he; "there 's the wick wearing out. Look sharp! I can't afford more than a sou a month for light. When you go to bed, you are expected to sleep. We have n't time to read Monsieur Paul de Kock's romances. Besides, the light might shine through the cracks in the gate, and the cops might see it."

"And then," timidly observed the elder lad, who alone dared to speak to Gavroche and answer him, "a spark might fall on the straw; we must be careful not to set the house on fire."

"You must n't say 'set a house on fire,'" remarked Gavroche; "say 'blaze a crib.'"

The storm grew more furious. Through the thunder-peals the rain was heard pattering on the back of the colossus.

"The rain 's done brown!" said Gavroche. "I like to hear the contents of the water-bottle running down the legs of the house. Winter 's an ass! It wastes its goods; it wastes its labour; it can't drown us, and that makes the old water-carrier up there scold at us."

This allusion to the thunder, all whose consequences Gavroche, in his character of a nineteenth century philosopher, accepted, was followed by a tremendous flash of lightning, so dazzling that part of it passed through the hole in the elephant's belly. Almost at the same mo-

ment the thunder roared, and very furiously. The two little boys uttered a cry, and jumped up so quickly that the brass netting was almost thrown down; but Gavroche turned his bold face toward them, and took advantage of the thunder-clap to burst into a laugh.

"Be calm, children. Don't upset the edifice. That's first-class thunder of the right sort. That's no great scratch of a flash of lightning. Dog-gone it! it's almost as fine at the Ambigu."

This said, he restored order in the netting, gently pushed the two children back on the bed, patted their knees to make them lie full length, and cried: —

"Since the good God has lighted his candle, I can blow out mine. Now, children, you must go to sleep, my little men. It's very bad not to sleep. It makes you swallow your rattle-trap, or stink in the throat, as they say in fashionable society. Wrap yourselves well up in the benjamin, for I am going to put out the light. Are you ready?"

"Yes," said the elder boy; "I'm all right. I feel as if I had a feather pillow under my head."

"You must n't say 'head,'" cried Gavroche, "say 'cocoa-nut.'"

The two children crept closer together. Gavroche settled them comfortably on the mat, and pulled the blanket up to their ears; then he repeated for the third time his injunction in the hieratic language: "Roost!" And he blew out the rope's end.

The light was no sooner extinguished than a singular trembling began to shake the netting under which the three children lay.

It consisted of a multitude of dull scratches and rubbings, which produced a metallic sound, as if claws and teeth were gnawing the copper wire. This was accompanied by all sorts of small shrill cries.

The little five-year-old boy, hearing this row above his head, and chilled with terror, nudged his elder brother; but he was "roosting" already, as Gavroche had ordered. Then the little one, unable to hold out any longer for fright, ventured to address Gavroche, but in a very low voice, and holding his breath.

"Sir?"

"Hullo!" said Gavroche, who had just closed his eyes.

"What is that?"

"It's the rats," answered Gavroche. And he laid his head on the mat again.

The rats, which really swarmed by thousands in the elephant's carcass, and which were those live black spots to which we have alluded, had been held in check by the flame of the torch so long as it was alight; but so soon as this cavern, which was, so to speak, their city, was restored to darkness, sniffing what that famous story-teller, Perrault, calls "fresh meat," they hurled themselves in bands on Gavroche's tent, climbed to the top, and bit at the meshes, as if trying to enter this novel sort of trap.

But the little one could not sleep.

"Sir?" he began again.

"Well?" asked Gavroche.

"What are rats?"

"They 're mice."

This explanation slightly reassured the child; for he had seen white mice in his life, and was not afraid of them. Still, he raised his voice once more.

"Sir?"

"Well?" repeated Gavroche.

"Why don't you keep a cat?"

"I had one," answered Gavroche; "I brought one here, but they ate her for me."

This second explanation undid the work of the first,

and the child began to tremble again. The dialogue between him and Gavroche was resumed for the fourth time.

"Sir?"

"Well?"

"Who was eaten?"

"The cat."

"What ate the cat?"

"The rats."

"The mice?"

"Yes, the rats."

The child, terrified by these mice which ate the cat, continued: —

"Sir, would those mice eat us?"

"Oh, Lord! yes," said Gavroche.

The child's terror was at its height. But Gavroche added: —

"Don't be frightened! They can't get in. And besides, I am here. Here, catch hold of my hand. Hold your tongue, and go to sleep!"

At the same time Gavroche took the little boy's hand across his brother. The child pressed the hand against his body, and felt reassured. Courage and strength have mysterious ways of communicating themselves. Silence again set in around them. The sound of their voices had startled and driven away the rats; and when they returned a few minutes later and made a furious attack, the three boys were plunged in sleep, and heard nothing more. The hours of the night wore away. Darkness covered the immense Place de la Bastille. A wintry wind, mingled with rain, blew in gusts. The patrol searched every door, enclosure, and dark corner, and in their search for nocturnal vagabonds passed silently before the elephant. The monster, erect and motionless, staring open-eyed into the darkness, seemed to be dreaming, as if satisfied with

its good deed, and sheltered the three poor sleeping children from the sky and from men. In order to understand what follows, it must be remembered that at this period the guard-house of the Bastille was situated at the other end of the square, and that what took place near the elephant could neither be seen nor heard by the sentry.

Toward the end of the hour which immediately precedes daybreak, a man came running out of the Rue St. Antoine, crossed the square, went round the great enclosure of the Column of July, and slipped through the palings under the elephant's belly. If any light had fallen on this man, it might have been guessed from his thoroughly drenched state that he had passed the night in the rain. On getting under the elephant he uttered a peculiar cry, which belonged to no human language, and which a parrot alone could reproduce. Twice he repeated this cry, of whose orthography the following scarcely conveys any idea: —

"Kirikikiou!"

At the second cry, a clear, gay young voice answered from the elephant's belly: —

"Yes!"

Almost immediately the plank that closed the hole was removed, and left a passage for a lad, who slid down the elephant's leg and dropped lightly at the man's feet. It was Gavroche. The man was Montparnasse.

As for the cry of "Kirikikiou," that was doubtless what the lad meant when he said: "Ask for Monsieur Gavroche."

On hearing it, he had waked with a start, crept out of his "alcove," moving the netting a little, and then carefully closing it again, after which he opened the trap and went down.

The man and the child silently recognized each other in the night; Montparnasse confined himself to saying:

"We want you; come and lend us a hand."

The gutter-snipe asked no further explanation.

"I 'm with you," said he.

And the pair proceeded toward the Rue St. Antoine, whence Montparnasse had come, winding rapidly through the long file of market-carts which come into town at this time.

The market-gardeners, lying on their wagons, among the salads and vegetables, half asleep, and rolled up to their eyes in their coats, on account of the beating rain, did not even look at these strange passers-by.

CHAPTER III.

VICISSITUDES OF ESCAPE.

THIS is what occurred that same night at La Force.

An escape had been planned between Babet, Brujon, Gueulemer, and Thénardier, although Thénardier was in solitary confinement. Babet had managed the affair on his own account, during the day, as we learned from Montparnasse's narrative to Gavroche; and Montparnasse was to help them from outside.

Brujon, having spent a month in the punishment-cell, had had time, first, to make a rope, and, secondly, to mature a plan. Formerly those severe places where prison discipline leaves the prisoner to himself, were composed of four stone walls, a stone ceiling, a brick pavement, a camp-bed, a grated window, and a door lined with iron, and were called dungeons; but the dungeon was considered too horrible, so now it is composed of an iron door, a grated window, a camp-bed, a brick pavement, a stone ceiling, four stone walls, and is called a "punishment-cell." A little daylight is visible about midday. The inconvenient thing about these rooms, which as we see are not dungeons, is that they allow those who ought to be at work, leisure to plot and plan.

Brujon, therefore, plotted; and he left the punishment-cell with a rope. As he was considered very dangerous in the Charlemagne yard, he was placed in the New

Building. The first thing he found there was Gueulemer; the second, a nail. Gueulemer, — that is to say, crime; a nail, — that is to say, liberty.

Brujon, of whom it is time to form a complete idea, was, with the appearance of delicate health and a deeply premeditated languor, a polished, intelligent fellow, a thief, with a caressing look and an atrocious smile. His look was the result of his will, and his smile the result of his nature. His first studies in his art were directed to roofs. He had introduced great improvements in the trade of lead-stealing, — the industry of men who strip roofs and peel gutters by the process known as "flying the blue pigeon."

The moment for an attempt at escape was hastened by the favourable fact that workmen were just then engaged in relaying and retipping a portion of the slates on the prison. The St. Bernard courtyard was no longer absolutely isolated from the Charlemagne and St. Louis yards. Up there, on the roof, there were scaffoldings and ladders, — in other words, bridges and staircases, in the direction of deliverance.

The New Building, which was the most cracked and decrepit affair possible to imagine, was the weak point in the prison. Saltpetre had so eaten away the walls that it had been found necessary to prop up and shore the ceilings of the dormitories, because stones became detached and fell on the prisoners in their beds. In spite of this decrepitude, the error was committed of confining in the New Building the most dangerous prisoners, the "hard cases," as they were called in the prison jargon.

The New Building contained four sleeping-wards, one above the other, and a garret-floor called the "Fine Air." A large chimney-flue, probably belonging to some old kitchen of the Duke de la Force, started from the ground-floor, passed through the four stories, cut the sleeping-

wards, where it figured as a sort of flattened pillar, into two parts, and came out through a hole in the roof.

Gueulemer and Brujon were in the same ward. They had been placed, by way of precaution, on the ground-floor. Accident willed it that the heads of their beds rested against the chimney.

Thénardier was directly over their heads in the attic called Fine Air.

The passer-by who stops in the Rue Culture Sainte Catherine, after passing the firemen's barracks, in front of the bath-house gate-way, sees a courtyard full of flowers and shrubs in wooden boxes, at the end of which is a small white rotunda with two wings, enlivened by green shutters, the bucolic dream of Jean Jacques. Not more than ten years ago there rose above this rotunda an enormous, black, frightful, naked wall, which was the outer wall of La Force. This wall behind that rotunda was like a glimpse of Milton caught behind Berquin. High though it was, this wall was surmounted by an even blacker roof, which could be seen beyond; it was the roof of the New Building.

It had four dormer windows protected by bars, and they were the windows of Fine Air. A chimney pierced the roof; it was the chimney of the sleeping-wards. Fine Air, the attic-floor of the New Building, was a sort of large hall, guarded by triple gratings and iron-lined doors, studded with enormous nails. Entering by the north end, on the left were the four dormers, and on the right, facing these, four square and spacious cages, separated by narrow passages, built up breast-high of masonry, and the rest, up to the roof, of iron bars. Thénardier had been in solitary confinement in one of these cages since the night of February 3. It was never discovered how, or by what connivance, he succeeded in procuring and concealing a bottle of that wine, invented, so 't is

said, by Desrues, with which a narcotic is mixed, and which the band of the *Endormeurs* (Sleep Compellers) rendered famous.

There are, in many prisons, treacherous turnkeys, half jailers, half robbers, who assist in escapes, sell to the police a faithless service, and "forget to lock the door of the Black Maria."

On that very night, then, when little Gavroche picked up the two lost children, Brujon and Gueulemer, who knew that Babet, who had escaped that same morning, was waiting for them in the street with Montparnasse, rose quietly, and began to pick a hole with the nail which Brujon had found, in the chimney against which their beds stood. The rubbish fell on Brujon's bed, so that they were not overheard. Showers of rain mingled with thunder shook the doors on their hinges, and produced a frightful and opportune noise in the prison. Those prisoners who awoke, pretended to fall asleep again, and left Brujon and Gueulemer to do as they pleased. Brujon was skilful, and Gueulemer was strong. Before any sound had reached the watchman sleeping in the grated cell which opened into the ward, the wall was broken through, the chimney scaled, the iron grating which closed the upper opening of the chimney forced, and the two redoubtable scoundrels were on the roof. The rain and the wind were tremendous; the roof was slippery.

"What a fine night for a guy!" said Brujon.

An abyss six feet broad and eighty feet deep separated them from the surrounding wall; and at the bottom of this abyss they could see a sentry's musket gleaming in the darkness. They fastened one end of the rope which Brujon had woven in his cell to the stumps of the chimney-bars which they had just wrenched off, threw the other end over the outer wall, crossed the abyss at a bound, clung to the coping of the wall, bestraddled it,

slid, one after the other, along the rope to a little roof which adjoins the bath-house, pulled their rope after them, jumped into the yard of the bath-house, ran across it, pushed open the porter's half-door, beside which hung his cord, pulled the cord, opened the gate-way, and found themselves in the street.

Not three-quarters of an hour had elapsed since they were standing on the bed, nail in hand, and their plan in their heads.

A few minutes later they had joined Babet and Montparnasse, who were prowling about the neighbourhood.

In drawing their rope after them, they broke it, and a piece had remained fastened to the chimney on the roof. They had met with no other accident, beyond taking almost all the skin off their hands.

That night Thénardier was warned, though it was impossible to discover how, and did not go to sleep. About one in the morning, the night being very black, he saw two shadows passing, in the rain and gusts, the window opposite his cage. One stopped just long enough to give a look. This was Brujon. Thénardier recognized him, and understood; that was enough for him.

Thénardier, reported to be a burglar, and detained on the charge of attempting to obtain money at night by violence, was kept under constant watch. A sentry, relieved every two hours, walked in front of his cage with a loaded musket. The Fine Air was lighted by a skylight. The prisoner had on his feet a pair of fetters weighing fifty pounds. Every day at four in the afternoon, a turnkey, escorted by two mastiffs, — this was the way things were done at that time, — entered his cage, placed near his bed a black loaf of two pounds weight, a jug of water, and a bowl of very weak broth in which a few beans floated, inspected his fetters, and tested the bars. This man with his dogs returned twice during the night.

Thénardier had obtained permission to keep a sort of iron pin, which he used to nail his bread to the wall, in order, as he said, "to preserve it from the rats." As Thénardier was under constant watch, this pin was not considered dangerous. Still, it was remembered afterward that one of the jailers said: "It would be better to give him a wooden skewer."

At two in the morning, the sentry, who was an old soldier, was changed, and a recruit took his place. A few minutes after, the man with the dogs paid his visit, and went away without noticing anything, except the remarkable youthfulness, and the "rustic look" of the "raw recruit." Two hours later, when they came to relieve this conscript, he was found asleep on the floor, lying like a dog beside Thénardier's cage. As for Thénardier, he was no longer there. His severed fetters lay on the ground. There was a hole in the ceiling of his cage, and another above it in the roof. A plank from his bed had been torn off and undoubtedly carried away, for it could not be found. In the cell was also found a half-empty bottle, containing the remains of the drugged wine with which the young soldier had been sent to sleep. The soldier's bayonet had disappeared. When all this was discovered, Thénardier was supposed to be out of reach. The truth is, that he was no longer in the New Building, but was still in great danger.

On reaching the roof of the New Building, he found the remainder of Brujon's rope hanging from the chimney-bars; but as this broken rope was much too short, he was unable to escape by the outer wall as Brujon and Gueulemer had done.

As you turn from the Rue des Ballets into the Rue du Roi de Sicile, you at once come upon a dirty hole on your right. In the last century a house stood here, of which only the back wall now exists, — a perfect ruin of a wall,

which rises three stories high between the adjacent buildings. This ruin can be recognized by two large square windows, still to be seen there; the centre one, that nearest the right-hand gable, is barred by a worm-eaten beam arranged as a prop. Through these windows could formerly be seen a lofty and lugubrious wall, which was a portion of the outer wall of La Force.

The gap left in the street by the destruction of this house is half filled up with a hoarding of rotten boards, braced by five stone pillars. Inside this enclosure there is a small hut built against the ruins, which still remains standing. The hoarding has a door in it which, a few years ago, was merely closed with a latch.

It was the top of this ruin which Thénardier succeeded in reaching, soon after three in the morning.

How did he get there? This was never explained or understood. The lightning must at once have hindered and helped him. Did he make use of the ladders and scaffolding of the slaters to climb from roof to roof, over the buildings of the Charlemagne yard, those of the St. Louis yard, the outer wall, and thence reach the ruin in the Rue du Roi de Sicile? But there were breaks in this journey which seemed to render it impossible. Did he lay the plank from his bed as a bridge from the roof of Fine Air to the outer wall, and crawl on his stomach along the coping, all round the prison till he reached the ruin? But the outer wall of La Force was battlemented and very irregular; it rose and sank. It was low at the firemen's barracks; it rose again at the bath-house; it was intersected by buildings; it was not even of the same height at the Hotel Lamoignon as on the Rue Pavée; there were drops and right-angles everywhere; and then, too, the sentries must have seen the fugitive's dark figure, — so that the road taken by Thénardier still remains almost inexplicable. Had he, illumined by that frightful

Thénardier's Escape.

Etched by W. H. W. Bicknell. — Painted by Jeanniot.

thirst for liberty which changes precipices into ditches, iron bars into hurdles, a cripple into an athlete, a gouty man into a bird, stupidity into instinct, instinct into intellect, and intellect into genius, invented and improvised a third mode of escape? No one ever knew.

It is not always possible to explain the marvels of escape. The man who breaks prison is, we repeat, inspired; there is something of the star and of the lightning flash in the mysterious gleam of flight. The effort toward deliverance is no less surprising than the flight toward the sublime; and people say of an escaped robber: "How did he manage to scale that roof?" in the same way as they say of Corneille: "Where did he find his 'qu'il mourût?'" [1]

However this may be, Thénardier, dripping with perspiration, drenched with rain, with his clothes in rags, his hands torn, his elbows bleeding, and his knees bruised, reached what children in their figurative language call the "sharp edge" of the wall of the ruin, where he lay at full length, and there his strength failed him. A perpendicular wall as high as a three-storied house separated him from the street.

His rope was too short.

There he waited, pale, exhausted, despairing, though just now so hopeful, still shielded by darkness, but telling himself that day would soon come; horrified at the thought that he should shortly hear the neighbouring clock of St. Paul strike four, the hour when the sentry would be changed, and when he would be found asleep under the hole in the roof; gazing with stupor, in the light of the lamps, at the wet, black pavement at such a terrible depth below, — that desired and yet terrible pavement which meant death and which meant liberty.

[1] A famous phrase in one of Corneille's tragedies, meaning "let him die."

He asked himself whether the three accomplices of his flight had succeeded, whether they had heard him, and whether they would come to his help. He listened. Excepting a patrol, no one had passed through the street since he had been lying there. Nearly all the market-carts from Montreuil, Charonne, Vincennes, and Bercy come into town by the Rue St. Antoine.

Four o'clock struck. Thénardier trembled. A few minutes later, that terrific and confused noise which follows the discovery of an escape, broke out in the prison. The sound of doors opening and shutting, the creaking of gates on their hinges, the tumult in the guard-house, and the clang of musket-butts on the pavement of the yards fell upon his ear. Lights flashed past the grated windows of the sleeping-wards, a torch ran along the roof of the New Building, and the firemen were called out. Their helmets, which the torch lit up in the rain, came and went along the roofs. At the same time, Thénardier saw, in the direction of the Bastille, a pale light mournfully whitening the horizon.

He was on the top of a wall ten inches wide, lying in the pitiless rain, with a gulf on his right hand and on his left, unable to stir, suffering from the dizziness of a possible fall, and the horror of a certain arrest, and his thoughts, like the pendulum of a clock, swung from one of these ideas to the other: "Dead if I fall, caught if I stay."

In this state of agony, he suddenly saw, the street being still perfectly dark, a man, who glided along the walls, and who came from the Rue Pavée, stop in the recess over which Thénardier was, as it were, suspended. This man was joined by a second, who walked with similar caution, then by a third, and then by a fourth. When these men met, one of them raised the hasp of the gate in the hoarding, and all four entered the enclosure where

the hut stands. They stopped exactly under Thénardier. These men had evidently selected this place in order that they might consult together, without being seen by passers-by or the sentry guarding the wicket of La Force a few paces distant. It must be added also, that the rain kept this sentry confined to his box. Thénardier, unable to distinguish their faces, listened to their remarks with the desperate attention of a wretch who feels himself lost.

Something like hope shone before his eyes when he heard these men talking slang. The first said in a low but distinct voice: "Let 's cut and run. What fake are we up to here?"

The second replied: —

"It parnys[1] hard enough to put out the fires of Old Harry himself. Besides, the bobbies will be along soon; there 's a bloke on guard. We shall get smugged here."

Two words employed, *icigo* and *icicaille*, which both mean "here," and which belong, the first to the flash language of the barrier, and the second to that of the Temple, were rays of light for Thénardier. By *icigo* he recognized Brujon, who was a prowler at the barrier, and by *icicaille*, Babet, who, among all his other trades, had been a second-hand clothes dealer at the Temple.

The antique slang of the great century is no longer spoken except at the Temple, and indeed, Babet was the only man who spoke it in all its purity. Had it not been for the *icicaille*, Thénardier could not have recognized him, for he had completely altered his voice.

Meantime, the third man had interfered.

"There is no hurry yet; let us wait a little. How do we know that he does not need our help?"

By this, which was only French, Thénardier recognized Montparnasse, who prided himself on understanding every slang dialect, and speaking none of them.

[1] Rains.

As for the fourth man, he held his tongue, but his broad shoulders betrayed him. Thénardier did not hesitate. It was Gueulemer.

Brujon replied almost impetuously, but still in a low voice: —

"What are you pattering! The boss of the lush-crib has not been able to pike it. He don't know the time of day. It takes a deep file to tear up his shirt and cut his sheets in strips to make a rope, to make holes in doors, screeve fakements, make twirls, file his fetters through, hang his rope out of the window; to put himself away and disguise himself! The old chap can't have done it, for he don't know beans."

Babet added, still in that good classic slang which Poiailler and Cartouche spoke, and which is to the bold, new, highly coloured slang which Brujon used, what the language of Racine is to that of André Chénier: —

"Your boss-cove must have been nabbed in the act. You have to be fly. He is only an apprentice. He 's been bamboozled by a crusher, perhaps by a nark, who played the fool. Lend a lug, Montparnasse. Do you hear those shouts in the prison? You saw all those glims. He 's tumbled, I say! Well, he will get off with twenty stretches. I don't funk. I am no coward, as everybody knows, but there is nothing to be done but to make tracks; if we don't, we shall have to dance. Don't be shirty, but come along with us. Let 's liquor up together."

"Friends must not be left in the lurch," growled Montparnasse.

"I tell you he 's been put away," replied Brujon, "and at the present moment the bully-boss is n't worth a cent. We can do nothing for him, so let us cut stick. I feel every moment as if a reeler were running me in."

Montparnasse made but a feeble resistance; the truth is that these four men, with the fidelity of rascals, who

never desert each other, had prowled round La Force all night long, in spite of the peril they incurred, in the hope of seeing Thénardier appear on the top of some wall. But the night, which became really too fine, a down-pour which rendered all the streets deserted, the cold which overpowered them, their dripping clothes, their worn-out shoes, the alarming noises which had broken out in the prison, the hours which had elapsed, the patrols they had met, the hope which departed and the fear that returned, — all urged them to beat a retreat. Montparnasse himself, who was perhaps Thénardier's son-in-law in a certain sense, yielded, and in a moment they would be gone. Thénardier gasped on his wall as the shipwrecked crew of the "Medusa" did on their raft, when they saw the ship which they had sighted, fade away on the horizon.

He dared not call to them; a cry might be heard and ruin everything; but he had an idea, a last idea, an inspiration, — he took from his pocket the end of Brujon's rope, which he had detached from the chimney of the New Building, and flung it into the enclosure. It fell at their feet.

"A widow!"[1] said Babet.

"My tortoise!"[2] said Brujon.

"The bully-boss is there," said Montparnasse.

They looked up. Thénardier thrust out his head a little.

"Quick," said Montparnasse; "have you the other end of the rope, Brujon?"

"Yes."

"Tie the two ends together; we will throw the rope to him. He can fasten it to the wall, and it will be long enough for him to come down."

"Thénardier ventured to raise his voice: —

"I am frozen."

[1] A rope. [2] Ibid.

"We'll warm you up."

"I cannot stir."

"Let yourself slide; we will catch you."

"My hands are numb."

"Only just fasten the rope to the wall."

"I can't."

"One of us must go up," said Montparnasse.

"Three stories!" ejaculated Brujon.

An old plaster conduit pipe, which had served as a chimney for a stove formerly used in the shanty, ran along the wall almost to the spot where Thénardier was lying. This pipe, even then full of cracks and holes, has since fallen, but the marks of it are still to be seen.

It was very narrow.

"We might climb up by that," said Montparnasse.

"By that pipe?" exclaimed Babet; "a bloke? Oh, no, it would take a kid."

"Yes, a kid," said Brujon.

"Where can we find a brat?" said Gueulemer.

"Wait a minute," said Montparnasse; "I've got just the article."

He opened the door in the hoarding softly, assured himself that there was no one passing through the street, went out, shut the door cautiously after him, and ran off in the direction of the Bastille. Seven or eight minutes elapsed, — eight thousand centuries to Thénardier; Babet, Brujon, and Gueulemer did not open their lips. At last the door opened again, and Montparnasse entered, panting, and leading Gavroche. The rain continued to make the street completely deserted.

Little Gavroche stepped into the enclosure and looked calmly at the faces of those ruffians. The rain was dripping from his hair. Gueulemer said to him: —

"Brat, are you a man?"

Gavroche shrugged his shoulders and replied: —

"A kid like me is a cove, and coves like you are kids."

"The brat rattles his bone-box well!" exclaimed Babet.

"Parisian young uns are up to snuff," added Brujon.

"What do you want?" said Gavroche.

Montparnasse answered: —

"Climb up that pipe."

"With this widow," said Babet.

"And strap the tortoise,"[1] continued Brujon.

"At the top of the wall," added Babet.

"To the cross-bar of the window," said Brujon.

"What next?" asked Gavroche.

"Here it is," said Gueulemer.

The gutter-snipe examined the rope, the chimney, the wall, and the window, gave that indescribable and disdainful smack of the lips which signifies, "That all!"

"There is a man up there whom you must save," continued Montparnasse.

"Will you do it?" said Brujon.

"Donkey!" replied the lad, as if the question seemed to him ridiculous. And he took off his shoes.

Gueulemer seized Gavroche by one arm, placed him on the roof of the shanty, whose mouldering planks bent under the boy's weight, and handed him the rope, which Brujon had knotted together during the absence of Montparnasse. The urchin turned to the chimney, which it was an easy task to enter, thanks to a big crack close to the roof. Just as he was going to ascend, Thénardier, who saw safety and life approaching, leaned over the edge of the wall; the first light of day struck white on his forehead, bathed in sweat, his livid cheek-bones, his sharp, savage nose, and his bristling gray beard, and Gavroche recognized him.

"My eye!" said he, "it's my father. Oh, well, that

[1] Tie the rope.

won't stop me!" And taking the rope between his teeth, he resolutely began the ascent.

He reached the top, straddled across the old wall as if it had been a horse, and fastened the rope securely to the topmost cross-bar of the window. A moment after, Thénardier was in the street. So soon as he touched the pavement, so soon as he felt himself out of danger, he was no longer wearied, chilled, or trembling; the terrible things from which he had escaped vanished like smoke. All that strange, fierce intellect was re-aroused, and stood erect and free, ready to march onward. The first remark this man made was: —

"Well, whom are we to eat?"

It is unnecessary to explain the meaning of this frightfully transparent word, which signified at once to kill, to assassinate, and to rob, The real meaning of *to eat* is *to devour.*

"We must get into hiding," said Brujon. "Let's make quick work of it, and then part at once. There was an affair that looked well in the Rue Plumet, — a deserted street, a solitary house, an old rusty gate leading into a garden, and lone women."

"Well, why not?" asked Thénardier.

"Your titter[1] Eponine went to look at the thing," answered Babet.

"And she gave Magnon a biscuit," added Brujon; "there's nothing to be done there."

"The titter's no bounder,"[2] said Thénardier. "Still, we must see to it."

"Yes, yes," Brujon remarked; "we must see to it."

Not one of these men seemed to notice Gavroche, who during this colloquy was sitting on one of the fence-posts; he waited some minutes, perhaps in the hope that his father would turn to him, then he put on his shoes again, saying: —

[1] Girl. [2] Fool.

"Is that all? You fellows don't want me any more, I suppose. I've got you out of the scrape now. I'm off. I must go and wake my brats."

And he went off.

The five men left the enclosure, one after the other.

When Gavroche had disappeared round the corner of the Rue des Ballets, Babet took Thénardier on one side.

"Did you notice that brat?" he asked.

"What brat?"

"The kid who climbed up the wall and handed you the rope."

"Not particularly."

"Well, I don't know, but I fancy it 's your son."

"Nonsense," said Thénardier; "do you think so?"

BOOK VII.

SLANG.

CHAPTER I.

ITS ORIGIN.

PIGRITIA is a terrible word. It gives birth to a whole world, *la pègre,* for which read *robbery;* and a hell, *la pégrenne,* for which read *hunger.* Hence indolence is a mother, and has a son, robbery, and a daughter, hunger. Where are we now? In the region of slang. What is slang? It is at once a nation and an idiom; it is robbery under its two heads, — people and language. Four-and-thirty years ago, when the narrator of this grave and sombre history introduced into the middle of a work [1] written with the same object as this one, a robber speaking slang, there was amazement and clamour. "Why!

[1] The Last Day of a Condemned Man.

what! slang! Why, slang is a frightful thing! It is the language of the chain-gang, of hulks and prisons, of everything that is most abominable in society!" etc.

We could never understand objections of this nature. Since then, two powerful romance-writers, one of whom was a profound observer of the human heart, the other an intrepid friend of the people, — Balzac and Eugène Sue, — having made their rascals talk in their natural tongue, as the author of "The Last Day of a Condemned Man" did in 1828, the same objections were raised. People repeated: "What do writers mean by this repulsive dialect? Slang is odious! Slang makes us shudder!"

Who denies it? Of course it does.

If a wound, a gulf, or a society are to be probed, is it considered a mistake to drive the probe too deep? We have always thought that it was sometimes an act of courage, and, at the very least, a simple and useful action, worthy of the sympathetic attention which duty accepted and performed deserves. Why should we not explore and study everything, and why stop mid-way? To stop is the function of the probe, and not of the prober.

Certainly, it is neither an attractive nor an easy task to search the lowest depths of social order, where the earth leaves off and mud begins, to grope in those slimy waters, to pursue, seize, and fling quivering on the pavement, that abject idiom which drips with filth when thus brought to light, that pustulous vocabulary, each word of which seems an unclean ring of a monster of the mud and darkness. Nothing is more painful than to contemplate thus, in its nudity, by the light of thought, the frightful vermin swarm of slang. It seems, in fact, as if you had just plucked from its sewer a sort of horrible beast made for the night. You seem to see a frightful, living, and bristling polypus, which shivers, moves, trembles, demands the shadow again, menaces, and glares. One word

resembles a claw, another a lustreless and bleeding eye; some phrases seem to snap like the pincers of a crab. All this is alive with the hideous vitality of things which are organized out of disorganization.

Now, when did horror begin to exclude study? When did disease drive away the physician? Can we imagine a naturalist who would refuse to examine a viper, a bat, a scorpion, a scolopendra, or a tarantula, and throw them back into their darkness, saying: "Fie! how ugly they are!" The thinker who should turn away from slang would resemble a surgeon who turned away from an ulcer or a wart. He would be a philologist hesitating to examine a fact of language, a philosopher hesitating to scrutinize a fact of humanity. For, let us say to those who do not know it, slang is at once a literary phenomenon and a social result. What is slang, properly so called? It is the language of misery.

Here we may, perhaps, be stopped; the fact may be generalized, which is sometimes a way of attenuating it. We may be told that every trade, every profession, we might also say all the accidents of the social hierarchy, and all forms of intelligence, have their slang. The merchant who talks about *Montpellier in demand, Marseilles fine quality;* the broker who talks about *carrying stock* and *going long;* the gambler who says, *pique, repique,* and *capote;* the bailiff of the Norman Isles, who says, *the feoffee cannot make any claim on the fruits of the fee during the hereditary seizure of the realty by the tenant;* the playwright who says, *the piece was goosed;* the actor who says, *it fell flat;* the philosopher who says, *phenomenal triplicity;* the sportsman who talks of *a covey of partridges, a leash of woodcocks;* the phrenologist who talks of *amativeness, combativeness, secretiveness;* the infantry soldier who talks about *Brown Bess;* the dragoon who says *my gee* (horse); the fencing-master who says,

tierce, carte, disengage; the printer who says, *hold a chapel;* all — printer, fencing-master, dragoon, infantry man, phrenologist, sportsman, philosopher, actor, playwright, gambler, stock-broker, and merchant — talk slang. The painter who says, *my grinder;* the attorney who says, *my gutter-jumper;* the barber who says, *my clerk;* and the cobbler who says, *my scrub,* — all talk slang. Strictly speaking, and if we are precise, all the different ways of saying right and left, the sailor's larboard and starboard, the scene-shifter's off-side and prompt-side, and the parson's Epistle-side and Gospel-side, are slang. There is the slang of the affected lady as there was the slang of the would-be learned lady. The Hôtel de Rambouillet bordered on the Court of Miracles. There is the slang of duchesses, as is proved by this sentence, written in a note by a very great lady and very pretty woman: "You will find lots of reasons in this scrawl why I should take my own head." Diplomatic ciphers are slang; the pontifical chancery, writing 26 for "Rome," *grkztntgzyal* for "Envoy," and *abfxustgrnogrkzu tu* XI. for "the Duke of Modena," talks slang. The mediæval physicians who, in referring to carrots, radishes, and turnips, said *opoponach, perfroschinum, reptitalmus, dracatholicum angelorum,* and *postmegorum* talked slang. The sugar-manufacturer who talks of *clarified, lumps, molasses, bastard, common, burned, loaf,* — this honest manufacturer talks slang. A certain school of critics, who twenty years ago said, "half Shakspeare's works are puns and plays upon words," spoke slang. The poet and the artist who, with profound meaning, would call M. de Montmorency a Philistine, if he were not a connoisseur in verses and statues, talk slang. The classic Academician who calls flowers *Flora,* the fruits *Pomona,* the sea *Neptune,* love *flames,* beauty *charms,* a horse a *charger,* the white or tricolour cockade *the rose of Bellona,* the three-cornered

hat *the triangle of Mars*, — that classic Academician talks slang. Algebra, medicine, and botany have their slang. The language employed on shipboard — that admirable sea-talk, which is so complete and so picturesque, which Jean Bart, Duquesne, Suffren, and Duperré spoke, which is mingled with the straining of the rigging, the sound of speaking-trumpets, the clang of boarding-irons, the roll of the sea, the wind, the gale, and the cannon — is a heroic and brilliant slang, which is to the ferocious slang of robbers what the lion is to the jackal.

All this is perfectly true; but, whatever we may say, this mode of comprehending the word "slang" is an extension which everybody will not be prepared to admit. For our part, we reserve to the word its ancient, precise, circumscribed, and settled meaning, and we restrict slang to slang. The true slang, the slang pre-eminent, if the two words can be coupled thus, the immemorial slang which was a kingdom, is nothing else, we repeat, than the ugly, anxious, cunning, treacherous, venomous, cruel, equivocal, vile, profound, and fatal language of misery. There is, at the extremity of all abasement and all misfortune, a final depth of misery which revolts, and resolves to contend with the whole mass of fortunate facts and reigning rights, — a frightful struggle, in which, at one moment crafty at another violent, at once savage and unwholesome, it attacks the social order with pin-pricks through vice, and with stunning blows through crime. For the necessities of this struggle, misery has invented a fighting language, which is called slang.

To keep afloat and rescue from oblivion, above the gulf, were it only a fragment of any language which man has spoken, and which would otherwise be lost, — that is to say, one of the elements, good or bad, of which civilization is composed or by which it is complicated, — is to extend the data of social observation and to serve civil-

ization itself. Plautus rendered this service, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, by making two Carthaginian soldiers speak Phœnician; Molière also rendered it by making so many of his characters talk Levantine and all sorts of dialects. Here objections crop out afresh: Phœnician, all right! Levantine, very good! and even dialect, let it pass; for these are languages which have belonged to nations or provinces. But slang! Of what service is it to preserve slang? What is the use of helping slang "to survive"?

To this we will reply in one word. Assuredly, if the language which a nation or a province has spoken is worthy of interest, the language spoken by misery is still more worthy of attention and study.

This is the language which has been spoken in France, for instance, for more than four centuries, not only by one form of misery, but by all misery, — by every possible form of human misery.

And then, we insist upon it, the study of social deformities and infirmities, and the pointing of them out for cure, is not a task in which choice is permitted. The historian of manners and ideas has a mission no less austere than the historian of events. The latter has the surface of civilization, the struggles of crowned heads, the births of princes, the marriages of kings, battles, assemblies, great public men, open revolutions, — all the external part; the other historian has the interior, the basis, the people who labour, suffer, and wait, oppressed woman, the dying child, the secret warfare between man and man, obscure ferocities, prejudices, conventional iniquities, the subterranean consequences of the law, the secret evolutions of souls, the indistinct tremors of multitudes, those who die of hunger, the bare-footed, the bare-armed, the disinherited, the orphans, the unhappy, the infamous, and all the ghosts that wander in darkness.

He must go down with his heart full of charity and severity alike, as a brother and as a judge, into those impenetrable casemates where crawl pell-mell those who bleed and those who wound, those who weep and those who curse, those who fast and those who devour, those who endure evil and those who commit it. Are the duties of the historians of hearts and souls inferior to those of the historians of outward facts? Can we believe that Dante has less to say than Machiavelli? Is the under side of civilization, because it is deeper and more gloomy, less important than the upper? Do we know the mountain thoroughly if we do not know the cavern?

Let us note, by the way, that from our previous remarks a distinct separation, which does not exist in our mind, might be inferred between the two classes of historians. No one is a good historian of the patent, visible, striking, and public life of a people, unless he is at the same time and to a certain extent the historian of their deep and hidden life; and no one is a good historian of the interior unless he can be, whenever it is required, the historian of the exterior also. The history of manners and ideas permeates the history of events, and the opposite of this is also true. They are two different orders of facts which correspond to each other, are always linked together, and often give rise one to the other. All the features which Providence traces on the surface of a nation have their gloomy but distinct parallels in the depths; and all convulsions of the depths produce upheavings on the surface. As true history is a mixture of all things, the genuine historian is interested in everything.

Man is not a circle with but one centre; he is an ellipse with two foci. Facts are the one, and ideas the other.

Slang is nothing but a dressing-room where language,

having some wicked action to perform, disguises itself. It puts on these word-masks, these rags of metaphor. In this way it becomes horrible.

It can scarce be recognized. Is it really the French language, the great human tongue? Here it is, ready to go upon the stage and take up the cue of crime, suited for all parts in the repertory of evil. It no longer walks, but shambles; it limps upon the crutch of the Court of Miracles, — a crutch which may be metamorphosed into a club; its name is Vagrancy. All the spectres, its dressers, have made up its face; it crawls and stands erect, with the double movement of the reptile. It is henceforth ready for any part; it has been made to squint by the forger, has been verdigrised by the poisoner, blackened by the soot of the incendiary, and rouged by the murderer.

When you listen with honest men at the door of society, you catch the dialogue of those outside. You distinguish questions and answers. You hear, without comprehending it, a hideous murmur, sounding almost like human accents, but more like a yell than like speech. It is slang. The words are deformed, stamped with a sort of fantastic bestiality. You fancy that you hear hydras conversing.

It is unintelligibility in darkness. It gnashes its teeth, and talks in whispers, supplementing the gloom by mystery. There is darkness in misfortune, and greater darkness still in crime; these two darknesses amalgamated, compose slang. There is obscurity in the atmosphere, obscurity in deeds, obscurity in voices. It is a horrible, toad-like tongue, which goes, comes, hops, crawls, slavers, and moves monstrously in that vast gray mist composed of rain, night, hunger, vice, falsehood, injustice, nudity, suffocation, and winter, which is the high noon of the wretched.

Let us have compassion on the chastised. Alas! what are we ourselves? Who am I, who speak to you? Who are you, who listen to me? Whence do we come, and is it quite sure that we did nothing before we were born? The earth is not without resemblance to a jail. Who knows whether man be not the ticket-of-leave of Divine justice? Look closely at life. It is so constituted that we feel a sense of punishment everywhere.

Are you what is called a happy man? Well, you are sad every day. Each day has its great grief or its small anxiety. Yesterday you trembled for a health which is dear to you, to-day you fear for your own; to-morrow it will be a monetary anxiety, the day after, the diatribe of a slanderer, and the day after that again, the misfortune of some friend; then the weather, then something broken or lost, or a pleasure for which your conscience and your backbone reproach you; or, again, the course of public affairs, — to say nothing of heart-pangs. And so it goes on. One cloud is dispelled, another forms. There is hardly one day in a hundred of real joy and bright sunshine. And you are of that small number who are happy! As for other men, the stagnation of night rests upon them.

Thoughtful minds rarely use the expressions: "the happy and the unhappy." In this world, which is evidently the antechamber to another, there are no happy beings.

The true human division is this: the luminous and the shady. To diminish the number of the shady and increase that of the luminous, that is the object. That is why we cry: "Education! Knowledge!" To learn to read is to light the fire; every syllable spelled out is a spark.

When we say light, however, we do not necessarily mean joy. Men suffer in the light. Excess of light

burns; the flame is the enemy of the wing. To burn without ceasing to fly, that is the prodigy of genius.

When you know and when you love, you will still suffer. The day is born in tears. The luminous weep, if only for those in darkness.

CHAPTER II.

ITS ROOTS.

SLANG is the language of those who dwell in darkness.

Thought is affected in its gloomiest depths, and social philosophy is impelled to its most poignant meditations, in the presence of this enigmatic dialect, which is at once blighted, and in a state of revolt. Herein we see a visible chastisement. Every syllable is, as it were, branded. The words of the vulgar tongue appear in it, as if shrivelled and hardened by the hangman's red-hot irons. Some of them seem to be still smoking. Some phrases produce upon you the effect of a robber's fleur-de-lised shoulder suddenly laid bare. Ideas almost refuse to be expressed by these ticket-of-leave-substantives. The metaphors are at times so shameless that you feel that they have worn fetters.

Still, in spite of all this, and in consequence of all this, this strange dialect has by rights its own place in that great impartial museum, where there is room for the rusty copper coin as well as for the gold medal, and which is called literature. Slang, whether people admit it or no, has its syntax and its poetry. It is a language. If, by the deformity of certain words, we see that it has been chewed by Mandrin, we feel from the splendour of certain metonyms that Villon spoke it. That exquisite and famous line: —

> "But where are the snows of yester-year?"
> (Mais où sont les neiges d'antan?)

is a verse of slang. "Antan" (*ante annum*) is a word of beggars' slang which signified "the past year," and, by extension, "formerly." Five-and-thirty years ago, on the departure of the great chain-gang, in 1827, there might be read in one of the dungeons of Bicêtre this maxim, scratched with a nail upon the wall by a king of mendicants condemned to the galleys: "Les dabs d'antan trimaient siempre pour la pierre du Coësre," which means: "The kings of former days used always to go to be anointed." In the opinion of that king, anointing meant the galleys.

The word *décarade*, which expresses the departure of a heavy coach at a gallop, is attributed to Villon, and is worthy of him. This word, which strikes fire with all four of its feet, sums up in a masterly onomatopœia the whole of Lafontaine's admirable line:—

"Six stout horses dragged a coach."

From a purely literary point of view, few studies would be more curious or fertile than that of slang. It is an entire language within a language, a sort of sickly graft which has produced a vegetation, a parasite which has its roots in the old Gallic trunk, and whose sinister foliage crawls up the whole of one side of the language. This is what may be called the first, the vulgar aspect of slang. But to those who study language as it should be studied,— that is to say, as geologists study the earth,— slang appears like a veritable alluvial deposit. According as we dig more or less deeply, we find in slang, below the old popular French, Provençal, Spanish, Italian, Levantine, that language of the Mediterranean ports, English and German, the Romance tongue, in its three varieties of French, Italian, and Romanesque Romance, Latin, and, finally, Basque and Celtic. It is a deep and strange formation, a subterranean structure built up in

common by all the wretched. Each accursed race has deposited its stratum, each suffering has dropped its stone there, each heart has given its pebble. A multitude of wicked, low, or irritated souls, who passed through life, and have faded into eternity, linger there almost entire, and are to some extent still visible, in the shape of some monstrous word.

Do you want Spanish? Old Gothic slang swarms with it. Thus we have *boffette*, "a box" on the ear, which comes from *bofeton; vantane*, "a window" (afterward vanterne), from *vantana; gat*, "a cat," from *gato; acite*, "oil," from *aceyte*. Do you want Italian? We have *spade*, "a sword," which comes from *spada;* and *carvel* "a boat," which comes from *caravella*. From the English we have *bichot*, "the bishop;" *raille*, "a spy," from *rascal*, "rascallion;" *pilche*, "a case," from *pilcher*, "a scabbard." Of German origin are *calner*, "the waiter," *kellner, hers*, "the master," *herzog*, or "duke." Would you have Latin? Here are *frangir*, "to break," from *frangere; affurer*, "to steal," from *fur;* and *cadène*, "a chain," from *catena*. There is one word which reappears in every continental language, with a sort of mysterious power and authority, and that is the word *magnus*. Scotland makes of it, for instance, *mac*, which designates the chief of the clan, Mac-Farlane, Mac-Cullumore, the great Farlane, the great Cullummore,[1] slang reduces it to *mack*, afterward *Meg*, — that is to say, the "Deity." Do you wish for Basque? Here is *gahisto*, "the devil," which is derived from *gaiztoa*, "bad," and *sorgabon*, "good-night," which comes from *gabon*, "good-evening." In Celtic we find *blavin*, "a handkerchief," derived from *blavet*, "running water;" *menesse*, "a woman" (in a bad sense), from *meinec*, "full of stones;" *barant*, "a stream," from *baranton*, "a fountain;" *goffeur*, "a locksmith,"

[1] It must be noted, however, that in Celtic *mac* means *son*.

from *goff*, "a blacksmith;" and *guedouze*, "death," which comes from *guenn-du*, "white and black." Lastly, do you wish for a bit of history? Slang calls a crown piece "the Maltese," in memory of the coin which was current aboard Maltese galleys.

In addition to the philological origins indicated, slang has other and yet more natural roots, which issue, so to speak, directly from the human mind itself.

In the first place, there is the direct creation of words. It is the mystery of language to paint with words which have, we know not how or why, faces. This is the primitive foundation of all human language, or what might be called the granite. Slang swarms with words of this kind, immediate words, created all of one piece, it is impossible to say when or by whom, without etymologies, analogies, or derivatives,— solitary, barbarous, sometimes hideous words, which have a singular power of expression, and are alive. The executioner, *Jack Ketch;* the forest, *le sabri;* fear, flight, *funk;* the footman, *flunkey;* the general, prefect, or minister, *Pharaoh, the boss;* and the devil, *Old Harry*, — nothing can be stranger than these words, which mask and yet reveal. Some of them, *Old Harry*, for instance, are at the same time grotesque and terrible, and produce the effect of a Cyclopean grimace.

In the second place, there is metaphor. It is the peculiarity of a language which wishes to say everything and yet conceal everything, to abound in figures. Metaphor is an enigma in which the robber who is scheming a plot, or the prisoner who is arranging an escape, take refuge. No idiom is more metaphorical than slang; *dévisser le coco* (to unscrew the cocoanut), "to twist the neck;" *tortiller* (to wriggle), "to eat;" *être gerbe* (to be booked), "to be tried;" *un rat* (little snakesman), "a stealer of bread;" *il lansquine*, "it rains," — a strik-

ing antique figure, which bears to some extent its date with it, assimilates the long, oblique lines of rain with the serried, sloping pikes of the lansquenets, and contains in one word the popular adage, " It is raining pitchforks. " Sometimes, in proportion as slang moves from the first to the second stage, words pass from the savage and primitive state to the metaphorical sense. The devil ceases to be " Old Harry, " and becomes " the baker, " or he who puts people in the oven. This is wittier, but not so grand; something like Racine after Corneille, or Euripides after Æschylus. Some slang phrases which belong to both periods, and have at once a barbaric and a metaphorical character, resemble phantasmagories: *Les sorgueurs vont solliciter les gails à la lune* (The night-hawks are going to claim tits[1] by the light of the moon). This passes before the mind like a group of spectres. We know not what we see. In the third place, there is expediency: slang lives upon the language. It uses it as it pleases, dips into it at random, and when the necessity arises, confines itself to altering it summarily and coarsely. Sometimes, with the ordinary words thus deformed and complicated with pure slang, picturesque phrases are formed, in which we feel the mixture of the two preceding elements, direct creation and metaphor: *le cab jaspine; je marronne que la roulette Pantin trime dans le sabri* (the tyke patters; I suspect that the Paris trap is passing through the wood); *le dab est sinve, ladabuge est merloussiere, la fée est bative* (the daddy is a flat, the burk is fly, and the titter is a whole team and a horse to let). Usually, in order to throw listeners off the track, slang confines itself to adding to every word in the sentence without distinction, an ignoble tail, a termination in *aille, orgue, iergue,* or *uche.* Thus: *Vouziergue trouvaille bonorgue ce gigotmuche?* (Doery youery findery

[1] Steal horses.

thatery leggery ofery muttony goodery?) This was a remark made by Cartouche to a jailer, in order to learn whether the sum offered for his escape suited him.

The termination in *mar* has been very recently added.

Slang, being the idiom of corruption, is itself quickly corrupted. Moreover, as it always seeks to hide itself so soon as it feels that it is understood, it transforms itself. Contrary to all other vegetation, every sunbeam which falls on it kills whatever it touches. Hence slang undergoes a constant process of decomposition and recomposition, an obscure and rapid labour which never ceases. It covers more ground in ten years than language does in ten centuries. Thus *larton* (head) becomes *lartif; gail* (a horse, tit), *gaye* (prad); *fertanche* (straw), *fertille* (strommel); *momignard* (a kid), *momaque; fiques* (clothes) (clobber), *frusques; chique* (the church) (humbox) *l'egrugeoir;* and *colabre* (the neck) (scrag) *colas.* The devil is first *gahisto,* then *le rabouin,* and next the "baker;" a priest is *ratichon* (a devil-dodger), and then *sanglier* (a patrico); a dagger is the *vingt-deux* (chive), next a *surin,* and lastly a *lingre;* the police are *railles* (reelers), then *roussins* (crushers), then *marchands de lacet* (bracelet merchants), then *coqueurs* (bobbies), and lastly *cognes* (cops); the executioner is *taule* (Jack Ketch), then *Charlot,* then the *atigeur,* and then the *becquillard* (old man). In the seventeenth century, to fight was to "wallop;" in the nineteenth, it is "to chaw a man all up;" but there have been twenty different names between these two extremes. Cartouche's talk would be Hebrew to Lacenaire. All the words of this language are perpetually engaged in flight, like the men who use them.

Still, from time to time, and owing to this very movement, the old slang reappears and becomes new again. It has its head-quarters, where it holds its ground. The

Temple preserved the slang of the seventeenth century, and Bicêtre, when it was a prison, that of Thunes (the beggars). There the termination in *anche* of the old Thuners (mendicants) could be heard: *Boyanches-tu?* (Do you drink?) *Il croyanche* (He believes). But perpetual motion none the less remains the law.

If the philosopher succeeds in fixing momentarily, for the purpose of observation, this language, which is incessantly evaporating, he falls into sorrowful and useful meditation. No study is more efficacious or more fertile and instructive. There is not a metaphor or an etymology in slang which does not contain a lesson. Among these men, *to fight* means *to pretend.* They "fight" a disease; cunning is their strength.

With them the idea of man is not separated from the idea of a shadow. Night is called *la sorgue* (darkmans), and man, *l'orgue:* man is a derivative of night.

They have formed the habit of regarding society as an atmosphere which kills them, as a fatal force; and they talk of their liberty as we should speak of our health. A man under arrest is a "sick man;" a man who is sentenced is a "corpse."

The most terrible thing for the prisoner within the four stone walls which form his sepulchre, is a sort of freezing chastity, and hence he always calls the dungeon the *castus.* In that funereal place, outside life always appears under its most smiling aspect. The prisoner has irons on his feet. You may perhaps fancy that he thinks how people walk with their feet? No; he thinks that they dance with them. So, if he succeed in cutting through his fetters, his first idea is that he can now dance, and he calls the saw a *bastringue* (a low dance). A name is a *centre,* a profound assimilation. The ruffian has two heads, — the one which reasons out his actions and guides him through life, the other which

he has on his shoulders on the day of his death. He calls the head which counsels him in crime the *sorbonne* (knowledge-box), and the one that expiates it, the *tronche* (chump). When a man has nothing but rags on his body and vices in his heart, when he has reached that double moral and material degradation which the word *gueux* (blackguard) characterizes in its two significations, he is ripe for crime. He is like a well-sharpened blade; he has two edges,— his distress and his villainy; so slang ceases to call him a *gueux*, and dubs him a *reguisé*. What are the galleys? A furnace of damnation, a hell; and the convict calls himself a *fagot*. And finally, what name do malefactors give to their prison? The *college*. A whole penitentiary system might be evolved from that word.

Would you like to know whence came most of the galley songs,— those refrains called in the special vocabularies the *lirlonfa?* Listen to this:—

There was in the Châtelet at Paris a large, long cellar, which was eight feet below the level of the Seine. It had neither windows nor gratings; the sole opening was the door. Men could enter it, but air could not. This cellar had for ceiling a stone arch, and for floor ten inches of mud. It had been paved, but, owing to the leakage of the water, the paving had rotted and fallen to pieces. Eight feet above the ground, a long massive joist ran from one end to the other of this vault. From this joist hung, at regular distances, chains three feet long, and at the end of these chains were iron collars. In this cellar, men condemned to the galleys were kept until the day of their departure for Toulon. They were thrust under this beam, where each found his fetters swinging in the darkness and waiting for him.

The chains, like pendent arms, and the collars, those open hands, seized those wretches by the neck. They were riveted and left there. As the chain was too short,

they could not lie down. They remained motionless in that cellar, in that night, under that beam, almost hung, forced to make extraordinary efforts to reach their loaf or water-jug, with the vault above their heads and mud up to their knees, drawn and quartered by fatigue, giving way at the hips and knees, hanging on by their hands to the chain to rest themselves, unable to sleep except standing, and awakened every moment by the choking of the collar. Some never waked. To eat, they were compelled to draw up their bread, which was thrown to them in the mud, with the heel, all along the thigh, until it reached their hand.

How long did they remain in this state? One month, two months, sometimes six months. One man remained a year. It was the antechamber of the galleys. Men were put there for stealing a hare from the king. In this hellish sepulchre, what did they do? They died by inches as men can do in a sepulchre, and they sang, which men can do in hell; for when there is no longer any hope, song remains. In Maltese waters, when a galley was approaching, the singing was heard before the sound of the oars. The poor poacher, Survincent, who passed through the cellar-prison of the Châtelet, said, "Rhymes sustained me." Poetry is useless; what is the good of rhymes?

In this cellar nearly all the slang songs were born. It is from the dungeon of the great Châtelet of Paris that the melancholy chorus of the Montgomery galley — *Timaloumisaine, timoulamison* — comes. Most of the songs are sad, some are gay, and one is tender: —

> "This is the home
> Of the little archer."[1]

Do you what you will, you cannot destroy that eternal relic of man's heart, love.

[1] Cupid.

In this world of dark deeds, secrets are kept; for secrets are a thing belonging to all. To these wretches, secrecy is the unity which serves as the basis of union. To break secrecy is to tear from each member of this fierce community something of himself. To denounce is called, in the energetic language of slang, *manger le morceau*, " to eat a piece " (to turn snitch), as if the denouncer took a little of the substance of each, and fed himself on a piece of the flesh of each.

What is it to receive a buffet? The common-place metaphor answers: " It is seeing six-and-thirty candles " (to see stars). Here slang interferes and reads *camoufle*[1] for candle; upon which, ordinary language takes *camouflet* as a synonym for a box on the ear. Thus, by a sort of infiltration from bottom to top, by the aid of metaphor, that incalculable trajectory, slang, ascends from the cellar to the academy, and Poulailler saying: " I light my *camoufle*," leads Voltaire to write: " Langleviel la Beaumelle deserves a hundred *camouflets*."

Searching in slang means a discovery at every step. The study and investigation of this strange idiom lead to the point of intersection of regular society with society which is accursed.

The thief has also his food for powder, or stealable matter, in you, in me, in the first passer-by, the *pantre* (the flats, everybody).

Slang is the Word turned convict.

It creates consternation to reflect that the thinking principle of man can be hurled down so deep that it may be dragged and bound by the obscure tyranny of fatality, that it may be fastened to some unknown rivets in that yawning abyss.

Alas! will no one come to the help of the human soul in this darkness? Is it its destiny there to await for-

[1] Candlestick.

ever the mind, the liberator, the immense rider of Pegasuses and hippogriffs, the hero of dawn, who descends from the azure sky between two wings, the radiant knight of the future? Will it ever call in vain to its rescue the lance of the light of the ideal? Is it condemned always to hear the dread approach of Evil through the dark clouds of the abyss, and to catch glimpses closer and closer to it, beneath the hideous water of that dragon's head, that slavering maw, and that serpentine undulation of claws, swellings, and rings? Must it remain there, without a gleam of light, without hope, left to the horror of that fearful approach, vaguely scented out by the monster, shuddering, with dishevelled hair, wringing its hands and eternally chained to the rock of night, like a sombre Andromeda, white and naked in the darkness!

CHAPTER III.

LAUGHING SLANG AND CRYING SLANG.

AS we see, all slang, the slang of four hundred years ago, as well as that of the present day, is penetrated by that gloomy symbolic spirit which gives to every word at one moment an agonized accent, at another a menacing air. We see in it the mild old melancholy of those mumpers of the Court of Miracles, who played at cards with packs of their own, some of which have been handed down to us. The eight of clubs, for instance, represented a tall tree bearing eight enormous clover leaves, — a sort of fantastic personification of the forest. At the foot of this tree was a lighted fire, over which three hares were roasting a gamekeeper on a spit, and behind him, over another fire, hung a steaming pot, from which a dog's head emerged. Nothing can be more lugubrious than these reprisals in painting upon a pack of cards, in the face of the stakes for burning smugglers and the cauldron for boiling coiners. The various forms which thought assumed in the kingdom of slang, even song, raillery, and threats, — all had this impotent and dejected character. All the songs, of which a few melodies have come down to us, were humble and lamentable enough to draw tears. The *pègre* (prig)[1] calls himself the poor prig; and he is always the hare in hiding, the fugitive mouse, or the bird that flies away. He hardly protests, but restricts himself to sighing. One of his

[1] Thief.

laments has reached us: "Je n'entrave que le dail comment meck, le daron des orgues, peut atiger ses mômes et ses momignards, et les locher criblant sans être atigé luimême."[1] The wretch, whenever he has time to think, makes himself little before the law and paltry before society. He lies flat on his stomach, supplicates, and implores pity. We feel that he knows himself to be in the wrong.

Toward the middle of the last century a change took place. Prison songs and thieves' choruses assumed, so to speak, an insolent and jovial air. The *larifla* was substituted for the plaintive *maluré*. In the eighteenth century we again find in nearly all the songs of the galleys, the hulks, and the chain-gangs, a diabolical and enigmatical gayety. We hear that strident and lilting refrain which seems illumined by a phosphorescent gleam, and appears to have been cast into the forest by a will-o'-the-wisp playing the fife:—

"Mirlababi surlababo
Mirliton ribonribette,
Surlababi mirlababo
Mirliton ribonribo."

This was sung while cutting a man's throat in a cellar or a thicket.

It is a serious symptom that in the eighteenth century the old melancholy of these desponding classes disappears, and they begin to laugh. They mock the great "Meg"[2] and the great "Dab."[3] Given Louis XV., they call the king of France "the Marquis de Pantin;[4] and lo! they are almost gay. A sort of dancing light

[1] I don't twig how the nib cove, the dadi of us blokes, can chump his kids and titters, and hear them nabbing a bib, without being towelled himself. (I don't understand how God, the father of men, can torture His children and His grandchildren, and hear them cry, without suffering Himself.)

[2] God. [3] Ibid. [4] Paris.

issues from these wretches, as if their conscience no longer weighed them down. These lamentable tribes of darkness no longer possess the desperate audacity of deeds, but the careless audacity of the mind. This is a sign that they are losing the sense of their criminality, and that they feel some support of which they are themselves ignorant, — even among thinkers and dreamers. It is a sign that robbery and plunder are beginning to penetrate into doctrines and sophisms in such fashion as to lose a little of their ugliness, and to communicate much of it to the sophisms and the doctrine. In short, it is a sign of some prodigious and speedy eruption, unless a diversion arise.

Let us halt here for a moment. Whom do we accuse? Is it the eighteenth century? Is it its philosophy? Certainly not. The work of the eighteenth century is wholesome and good. The Encyclopædists, with Diderot at their head, the physiocrats under Turgot, the philosophers led by Voltaire, and the Utopians commanded by Rousseau, are four sacred legions. The immense advance of humanity toward the light is due to them. They are the four advanced guards of the human race, moving toward the four cardinal points of progress, — Diderot toward the beautiful, Turgot toward the useful, Voltaire toward truth, and Rousseau toward justice. But by the side of and above the philosophers, there were the sophists, a venomous vegetation mingled with a healthy growth, — hemlock in the virgin forest. While the hangman was burning the great liberating books of the age on the grand staircase of the Palace of Justice, writers now forgotten were publishing, with the royal sanction, strangely disorganizing books, which were eagerly read by the wretched. Some of these publications, patronized, strange to say, by a prince, will be found in the Secret Library. These facts, significant but unknown,

were unnoticed on the surface. Sometimes the very obscurity of a fact constitutes its danger. It is obscure because it is subterranean. Of all these writers, the one who perhaps dug the most death-dealing gallery of that day in the masses was Restif de la Bretonne.

This work, common to all Europe, produced greater ravages in Germany than anywhere else. In Germany, during a certain period, summed up by Schiller in his famous drama of "The Robbers," theft and plunder rose up in protest against property and labour. They appropriated certain specious and false elementary ideas, which, though apparently just, were in reality absurd, wrapped themselves up in these ideas, and to some extent disappeared in them, assumed an abstract name, and passed into a theoretical state, and in this way circulated among the laborious, suffering, and honest masses, without the cognizance of even those imprudent chemists who prepared the mixture, or of the masses who accepted it. Whenever a fact of this nature is produced, it is serious. Suffering engenders passion; and while the prosperous blind themselves, or go to sleep, the hatred of the unfortunate classes kindles its torch at some sullen or ill-constituted mind, which is dreaming in a corner, and sets to work to examine society. The examination of hatred is a terrible thing.

Hence come, if the misfortune of the age so wills it, those frightful commotions, formerly called "Jacqueries," beside which purely political agitations are child's play, and which are no longer the struggle of the oppressed against the oppressor, but the revolt of discomfort against comfort. Everything is overthrown at such a time. Jacqueries are the earthquakes of nations.

The French Revolution, that immense act of probity, cut short this peril, which was perhaps imminent in Europe toward the close of the eighteenth century.

The French Revolution, which was nothing but the ideal armed with the sword, rose, and, by one and the same sudden movement, closed the door of evil and opened the door of good.

It made the question clear, promulgated the truth, expelled miasma, ventilated the age, and crowned the people.

We may say that it created man a second time, by giving him a second soul, — justice.

The nineteenth century inherits and profits by its work; and to-day the social catastrophe which we just now indicated is simply impossible. Blind is he who denounces it! Fool is he who fears it! Revolution is the vaccine of Jacquerie.

Thanks to the Revolution, social conditions are altered. Feudal and monarchical diseases no longer run in our blood. There is none of the Middle Ages left in our constitution. We no longer live in a time when fearful swarms within break forth, when we hear beneath our feet the obscure course of a dull sound, when the earth thrown out from mole-holes appears on the surface of civilization, when the soil cracks, when the roof of caverns opens, and monstrous heads suddenly emerge from the ground.

The revolutionary sense is a moral sense. The sentiment of right, once developed, develops the sentiment of duty. The universal law is liberty, which ends where the liberty of others begins, according to Robespierre's admirable definition. Since 1789, the whole people has been enlarged into the sublime individual. There is no poor man who, possessing his right, has not his ray of sunlight. The man dying of hunger feels within him the honesty of France. The dignity of the citizen is an inward armour. The man who is free, is scrupulous. He who votes, reigns. Hence comes in-

corruptibility; hence comes the abortion of unhealthy lusts; hence eyes heroically lowered before temptation. The revolutionary sanitariness is so great, that on a day of deliverance, a 14th of July or a 10th of August, there is no longer any populace. The first cry of the enlightened and increasing crowds is: "Death to thieves!" Progress is an honest man. The ideal and the absolute do not steal pocket-handkerchiefs. By whom were the wagons containing the wealth of the Tuileries escorted in 1848? By the rag-pickers of the Faubourg St. Antoine. Tatters mounted guard over the treasure. Virtue rendered those ragamuffins resplendent. In those carts, in half closed chests,— some, indeed, still open,— there was, amid a hundred dazzling caskets, that ancient crown of France, all made of diamonds, surmounted by the carbuncle of royalty, the Regent diamond, worth thirty millions of francs. Barefooted, they guarded that crown.

Hence Jacquerie is no longer possible. I am sorry for the sake of the clever. That old fear has produced its last effect, and can no longer be employed in politics. The mainspring of the red spectre is broken. Every one knows it now. The scarecrow no longer scares. The birds treat the manikin familiarly, foul creatures light upon it, and the middle classes laugh at it.

CHAPTER IV.

TWO DUTIES, — TO WATCH AND HOPE.

THIS being the case, is all social danger dispelled? Certainly not. There is no Jacquerie. Society may rest assured on that point; the blood will not again rush to its head. But let it take heed how it breathes. Apoplexy is no longer to be apprehended, but consumption is there. Social consumption is called wretchedness.

People may be blown up as well as struck by lightning.

Let us never weary of repeating, that to think first of the disinherited and sorrowful classes; to relieve, ventilate, enlighten, and love them; to enlarge their horizon to a magnificent extent; to lavish upon them education in every shape; to set them an example of labour, and never of indolence; to lessen the weight of the individual burden by increasing the notion of the universal aim; to limit poverty without limiting wealth; to create vast fields of public and popular activity, to have, like Briareus, a hundred hands to stretch out on all sides to the crushed and the weak; to employ the collective power in the grand task of opening workshops for every arm, schools for every aptitude, and laboratories for every intellect; to increase wages, diminish toil, and balance the debit and credit, — that is to say, to proportion enjoyment to effort, and supply to demand; in a word, to evolve from the social machine, on behalf of those who suffer and those who are ignorant, more

light and more comfort, is (and sympathetic souls must not forget it) the first of brotherly obligations, and (let egotistic hearts learn the fact) the first of political necessities.

And all this, we are bound to add, is but a beginning. The true question is this: labour cannot be a law without being a right. But we will not dwell on this, for this is not the place.

If nature be called Providence, society should call itself foresight.

Intellectual and moral growth is no less indispensable than material improvement. Knowledge is a viaticum. Thought is a prime necessity; truth is nourishment, like wheat. A reasoning faculty, deprived of knowledge and wisdom, pines away. We should feel the same pity for minds that do not eat as for stomachs. If there be anything sadder than a body perishing for want of bread, it is a mind dying of hunger for lack of light.

All progress tends toward the solution. Some day, people will be amazed. As the human race ascends, the deepest layers will naturally emerge from the zone of distress. The effacement of wretchedness will be effected by a simple elevation of level.

We should do wrong to doubt this blessed solution.

The past, we grant, is very powerful at the present hour. It has revived. This rejuvenescence of a corpse is surprising. Here it is, marching straight toward us. The dead man appears a victor, and is a conqueror. He arrives with his legions, superstitions; with his sword, despotism; with his banner, ignorance. Not long since he gained ten battles. He advances, he threatens, he laughs, he is at our gates. But we have no reason to despair. Let us sell the field on which Hannibal is encamped.

What have we, who believe, to fear? A back flow of

ideas is no more possible than it is for a river to flow up hill. Let those who desire no future reflect on this matter. When they say "No" to progress, they do not condemn the future, but themselves. They give themselves a deadly disease; they inoculate themselves with the past. There is only one way to reject To-morrow, and that is to die. Now, no death — that of the body, as late as possible, that of the soul, never — is what we desire. Yes, the sphinx will speak, the enigma will utter its word, and the problem will be solved. The people, sketched by the eighteenth century, will be finished by the nineteenth. He is an idiot who doubts it! The future blossoming, the speedy bursting into flower of universal welfare, is a divinely fatal phenomenon.

Immense and combined impulses govern human affairs, and lead them all within a given time to a logical state, — that is to say, to a state of equilibrium, or, in other words, of equity. A force composed of earth and heaven results from humanity, and governs it. This force is a worker of miracles. Marvellous results are as easy to it as extraordinary incidents. Aided by science, which comes from man, and the event, which comes from Another Source, it is not alarmed by those contradictions in the attitude of problems which seem to the vulgar herd impossibilities. It is no less skilful at producing a solution from the approximation of ideas than at producing instruction from the approximation of facts; and we may expect anything and everything from that mysterious power of progress, which one fine day confronted Orient and Occident in a sepulchre, and made the Imams hold converse with Bonaparte in the interior of the great Pyramid.

Meantime, let there be no halt, no hesitation, no check, in the grand forward march of minds. Social philosophy is essentially the science of peace. Its object

is, and its result must be, the dissolution of passions by the study of antagonisms. It examines, scrutinizes, and analyzes; then it recomposes. It proceeds by means of reduction, discarding all hatred.

More than once a society has been destroyed by the wind which is let loose on mankind. History is full of the shipwrecks of nations and of empires. Some fine day that strange force, the hurricane, passes, and carries away manners, laws, and religions. The civilizations of India, Chaldæa, Persia, Assyria, and Egypt have disappeared in turn. Why? We are ignorant. What are the causes of these disasters? We do not know. Could those societies have been saved? Was it their fault? Did they obstinately persist in some fatal vice which destroyed them? What amount of suicide is there in these terrible deaths of a nation and a race? These are unanswerable questions. Darkness covers condemned civilizations. There was a leak somewhere, since they sank. We have nothing more to say; and it is with a sort of terror that we behold at the bottom of that sea which is called the past, and beneath those colossal waves, the centuries, the wreck of those immense vessels, Babylon, Nineveh, Tarsus, Thebes, and Rome, before the terrific blast which blows from all the mouths of the darkness. But there was darkness there, and we have light. If we are ignorant of the diseases of ancient civilizations, we know the infirmities of our own. We have the right of light upon every part of it. We contemplate its beauties and lay bare its deformities. Wherever it is wounded, we probe; and the suffering once decided, the study of the cause leads to the discovery of the remedy. Our civilization, the work of twenty centuries, is at once its monster and its miracle; it is worth saving. It will be saved. To solace it is much; to enlighten it is also something. All the labours of modern social philosophy should be brought to bear on this

point. The thinker of the present day has a grand duty, to apply the stethoscope to civilization.

We repeat it, this auscultation is encouraging; and we intend to end these few pages, an austere interlude in a mournful drama, by laying stress on this encouragement. Beneath the social mortality, we feel human imperishableness. The globe does not perish because here and there it has wounds in the shape of craters, and ringworms in the shape of sulphur-pits, nor because of a volcano which breaks out and scatters its fires around. The diseases of the people do not kill man.

And yet those who follow the social clinic shake their heads at times. The strongest, the tenderest, and the most logical have their hours of despondency.

Will the future arrive? It seems as if we might almost ask this question when we see so much terrible shadow, — sombre, face-to-face encounter of the egotists and the wretched. In the egotist we find prejudice, the clouds of a caste education, appetite growing with intoxication, a vertigo of prosperity that dulls the senses, a dread of suffering, which in some goes so far as an aversion for the sufferer, an implacable satisfaction, and the feeling of self so swollen that it bars the soul. In the wretched we find covetousness, envy, hatred of seeing others successful, the deep-seated impulses of the human beast to satisfy its desires, hearts full of mist, sorrow, want, fatality, impure and simple ignorance.

Must we still raise our eyes to heaven? Is the luminous point which we see there, one of those which die out? The ideal is frightful to look on, thus lost in the depths, — small, isolated, scarcely perceptible, shining, but surrounded by all those great black menaces, monstrously collected around it. For all that, though, in no more danger than a star in the yawning throat of the clouds.

BOOK VIII.

ENCHANTMENTS AND DESOLATIONS.

CHAPTER I.

BRIGHT LIGHT.

THE reader has, of course, understood that Eponine, having recognized through the gate the inhabitant of the house in the Rue Plumet, to which Magnon sent her, began by keeping the bandits aloof from the house, then led Marius to it, and that, after several days of ecstasy before that gate, Marius, impelled by that force which attracts iron to the magnet and the lover toward the stones of the house in which she whom he loves resides, had finally entered Cosette's garden, as Romeo did Juliet's garden. This had even been an easier task for him than for Romeo. Romeo was obliged to scale a wall, while Marius had merely to remove one

of the bars of the decrepit gate, which was loose in its rusty setting, after the fashion of the teeth of old people. Marius was slender, and easily passed through.

As there never was anybody in the street, and as Marius never entered the garden save at night, he ran no risk of being seen.

From that blessed and holy hour when a kiss affianced these two souls, Marius visited the garden every night. If at this moment of her life, Cosette had fallen in love with a man in the least unscrupulous or vicious, she would have been lost; for there are generous natures that surrender themselves, and Cosette was one of them. One of the magnanimities of woman, is to yield. Love, at that elevation where it is absolute, is complicated by a certain celestial blindness of modesty. But what dangers you incur, ye noble souls! You often give the heart, and we take the body. Your heart is left you, and you look at it in the darkness with a shudder. Love has no middle term; it either saves or destroys. This dilemma is the whole of human destiny. No fatality offers this dilemma of ruin or salvation more inexorably than does love. Love is life, if it be not death. It is a cradle, but also a coffin. The same feeling says " yes " and " no " in the human heart. Of all the things which God has made, the human heart is the one which gives out the most light, and, alas! the most darkness.

God willed it that the love which Cosette encountered, was one of those loves which save.

So long as the month of May of that year, 1832, lasted, there were every night in that poor untrimmed garden, under that thicket which daily became denser and more fragrant, two beings made up of all chastities and all innocences, overflowing with all the felicities of heaven, nearer to the archangels than to man, pure, honest, intoxicated, radiant, who shone for each other in the dark-

ness. It seemed to Cosette as if Marius had a crown, and to Marius as if Cosette had a halo. They touched each other, they looked at each other, they took each other by the hand, they drew close to each other; but there was a limit which they never passed. Not that they respected it, but they were ignorant of its existence. Marius felt a barrier in Cosette's purity, and Cosette felt a support in the loyalty of Marius. The first kiss had also been the last. Since then Marius had never gone farther than to touch Cosette's hand, or her neckerchief, or a lock of her hair, with his lips. Cosette was to him a perfume, and not a woman. He inhaled her. She refused nothing, and he asked for nothing. Cosette was happy, and Marius content. They lived in that ecstatic state which may be called the dazzling of one soul by another soul. It was the ineffable first embrace of two virgin souls in the ideal. Two swans meeting on the Jungfrau.

At this hour of love, an hour when voluptuousness is absolutely silenced by the omnipotence of ecstasy, Marius, the pure and seraphic Marius, would have sooner been capable of going home with a street-walker than of raising Cosette's gown as high as her ankle. Once, in the moonlight, Cosette stooped to pick up something on the ground; her dress opened and displayed her neck. Marius turned away his eyes.

What passed between these two lovers? Nothing. They adored each other.

At night, when they were there, that garden seemed a living and a sacred spot. All the flowers opened around them and sent them their incense; and they opened their souls and spread them over the flowers. The wanton and vigorous vegetation quivered, full of sap and intoxication, around these two innocents, and they uttered words of love at which the trees shivered.

What were these words? Mere breaths. Nothing more. These breaths were sufficient to trouble and affect all nature. A magic power which it would be difficult to understand, were we to read in a book their conversations, made to be carried away and dissipated like smoke beneath the leaves by the wind. Take away from these whispers of two lovers the melody which issues from the soul, and accompanies them like a lyre, and what is left is only a shadow. You say: "What! is that all?" Well, yes, child's play, repetitions, laughter at nothing, absurdities, foolishness, — all that is the most sublime and profound in the world, the only things which are worth the trouble of saying and hearing!

The man who has never heard, the man who has never uttered, these absurdities and paltry things is a fool and a wicked fellow. Said Cosette to Marius: —

"Do you know that my name is Euphrasie?"

"Euphrasie? No, it is Cosette."

"Oh, Cosette is an ugly name which was given me when I was little, but my real name is Euphrasie. Don't you like that name, — Euphrasie?"

"Yes; but Cosette is not ugly."

"Do you like it better than Euphrasie?"

"Well — yes."

"Then I like it better, too. It is true, Cosette is pretty. Call me Cosette;" and the smile that she added made this dialogue an idyl worthy of a forest in heaven.

Another time she looked at him intently and exclaimed: —

"You are handsome, sir; you are good-looking; you are witty; you are not at all stupid; you are much more learned than I, but I challenge you with the words: 'I love you!'"

And Marius, in the very heavens, thought he heard a strophe sung by a star.

Or else she gave him a little tap because he coughed, and said: —

"Do not cough, sir; I do not allow anybody to cough in my presence without permission. It is very naughty to cough and frighten me. I wish you to be well and strong, because if you were not well, I should be very unhappy. What should I do then?"

And this was simply divine.

Once Marius said to Cosette: —

"Just fancy! I supposed for a while that your name was Ursula."

This made them laugh the whole evening.

In the middle of another conversation, he happened to exclaim: —

"Oh, one day at the Luxembourg I felt disposed to smash a veteran!"

But he stopped short, and did not complete the sentence. He would have been obliged to speak to Cosette of her garter, and that was impossible. It would be to touch on the flesh, — a thing from which that immense, innocent love shrank with a sort of holy terror.

Marius pictured to himself life with Cosette like this, without anything else; to come every evening to the Rue Plumet, to remove the complaisant old bar of the judge's gate, to sit elbow to elbow on that bench, to look through the trees at the scintillation of approaching night, to let the fold in his trouser-knee touch Cosette's ample skirts, to caress her thumb-nail, and to inhale the same flower in turn, forever and indefinitely. During this time, clouds passed over their heads. Every time the wind blows it carries off more the dreams of man than of clouds of the sky.

This chaste, almost shy love was not absolutely devoid of gallantry. "To pay compliments" to her whom we love is the first mode of giving caresses; he who

tries it is half bold. A compliment is something like a kiss through a veil. Pleasure puts its sweet point upon it, while it hides itself. The heart shrinks back only to love the more. The cajoleries of Marius, all saturated with imagination, were, so to speak, of an azure hue. The birds, when they fly up yonder in the direction of the angels, must hear such words. Still, life, humanity, and all the positiveness of which Marius was capable were mingled with them. It was what is said in the grotto, as a prelude to what will be said in the chamber,— a lyrical effusion, strophe, and sonnet commingled, gentle hyperboles of cooing, all the refinements of adoration arranged in a posy, and exhaling a subtle and celestial perfume, an ineffable twitter of heart to heart.

"Oh," murmured Marius, "how lovely you are! I dare not look at you. That is the reason why I gaze at you. You are a Grace. I know not what is the matter with me. The hem of your dress, when the tip of your slipper peeps out, upsets me. And then, what an enchanting light when your thoughts become visible! Your good sense astonishes me. It seems to me at times that you are a dream. Speak; I listen, I admire. Oh, Cosette, how strange and charming it is! I am really mad. You are adorable, mademoiselle. I study your feet with the microscope, and your soul with the telescope."

And Cosette made answer: —

"And I love you a little more for all the time that has passed since this morning."

Questions and answers took care of themselves in this dialogue, which always turned on the subject of love, as elder-pith balls do on their weighted end.

Cosette's entire person was simplicity, ingenuousness, whiteness, candour, and radiance. It might have been

said of her, that she was transparent. She produced on every one who saw her a sensation of April and daybreak. There was dew in her eyes. Cosette was a condensation of the light of dawn in a woman's form.

It was quite natural that Marius, as he adored her, should admire her. But the truth is that this little school-girl, just fresh from a convent, talked with exquisite penetration, and made at times all sorts of true and delicate remarks. Her artless chatter was conversation. She was never mistaken about anything, and she saw things in their true light. Woman feels and speaks with the tender instinct of the heart, which is infallible.

No one but a woman knows how to say things which are at once gentle and deep. Gentleness and depth,— in those things the whole of woman is contained; all heaven lies therein.

In this perfect felicity, tears welled up in their eyes every moment. A crushed lady-bug, a feather fallen from a nest, a branch of hawthorn broken, moved their pity; and their ecstasy, sweetly mingled with melancholy, seemed to ask nothing better than to weep. The most sovereign symptom of love is a tenderness which at times becomes almost insupportable.

And side by side with all this,— for contradictions are the lightning sport of love, — they were fond of laughing; they laughed with enchanting ease, and so familiarly that, at times, they almost seemed like two boys.

Still, even though hearts intoxicated with chastity are unconscious of it, nature is ever there, and will not always be ignored. She is ever there with her brutal and sublime object; and however great the innocence of souls may be, in the most chaste private interview, that mysterious and adorable distinction which sepa-

rates a couple of lovers from a pair of friends is always apparent.

They idolized each other.

The permanent and the immutable go on forever; men love, they laugh, they make little grimaces and pouts, they intertwine their fingers, and that does not prevent eternity.

Two lovers conceal themselves in the evening, in the twilight, in the invisible, with the birds and the roses; they fascinate each other in the darkness with their hearts which they throw into their eyes; they murmur; they whisper; and meantime the vast oscillations of the planets fill infinity.

CHAPTER II.

PERFECT HAPPINESS.

COSETTE and Marius lived vaguely, startled by their very happiness. They took no note of the cholera which was decimating Paris in that very month. They had made as many confessions to each other as they could, but this did not extend very far beyond their names. Marius had told Cosette that he was an orphan, Pontmercy by name, a barrister by profession, and gained a livelihood by writing things for publishers; that his father was a colonel, a hero; and that he, Marius, had quarrelled with his grandfather, who was rich. He also incidentally remarked that he was a baron, but this did not produce much effect on Cosette. Marius a baron? She did not understand it. She did not know what the word meant. Marius was Marius to her. For her part, she confided to him that she had been educated at the convent of the Little Picpus; that her mother was dead, like his own; that her father's name was Fauchelevent; that he was very good and gave a great deal to the poor, but was himself poor, and deprived himself of everything, though he denied her nothing.

Strange to say, in the sort of symphony in which Marius had lived since he had again met Cosette, the past, even the most recent past, had become so confused and distant to him that what Cosette told him completely satisfied him. He never even dreamed of telling her about the nocturnal adventure in the garret, about Thénardier,

about the burning, the strange attitude and singular flight of her father. Marius had momentarily forgotten all this. He did not even know at night what he had done in the morning, where he had breakfasted, or who had spoken to him. There was a music in his ears which rendered him deaf to every other thought. He only existed during the hours when he saw Cosette. Then, as he was in heaven, it was perfectly natural that he should forget the earth. Both of them bore languidly the undefinable weight of immaterial joys. This is the way in which those somnambulists, called lovers, live.

Alas! who is there that has not experienced all these things? Why does an hour come when we emerge from this azure, and why does life go on afterward?

Loving almost takes the place of thinking. Love is an ardent forgetfulness of all else. It is absurd to require logic of passion. There is no more absolute logical sequence in the human heart than there is a perfect geometric figure in the celestial mechanism. For Cosette and Marius nothing existed save Marius and Cosette. The whole universe around them had fallen into a gulf. They lived in a golden moment, with nothing before them, nothing behind them. Marius scarce remembered that Cosette had a father. His brain was so dazzled that it became a blank. Of what did these lovers talk? As we have seen, of flowers, swallows, the setting sun, the rising moon, and all sorts of important things. They had told each other everything except everything. The everything of lovers is nothing. Of what use would it be to talk of her father, of realities, of that den, those bandits, that adventure? And was it quite certain that this nightmare had ever existed? They were two, they adored each other, and beyond that there was nothing else. It is probable that this disappearance of hell in our rear is inherent to the arrival in paradise. Have

we seen demons? Are there any? Have we trembled? Have we suffered? We no longer know. There is a roseate cloud over it all.

Hence these two beings lived in this way, very high up in the air, and with all the improbability which there is in nature. Neither at the nadir nor at the zenith, but between man and the seraphs, above the mud and below the ether, in the clouds. They were not so much flesh and blood as soul and ecstasy from head to foot. Already too sublimated to walk the earth, still too heavily charged with humanity to disappear into heaven, and held in suspension like atoms which are waiting to be precipitated. Apparently beyond the pale of destiny; ignorant of that dull routine yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow; amazed, transported, floating; at moments so light that they were ready for a flight into the infinite; almost ready to soar away forever.

They slept with open eyes, thus sweetly lulled. Oh, splendid lethargy of the real overpowered by the ideal!

Sometimes, beautiful as Cosette was, Marius closed his eyes before her. The best way to gaze at the soul is with closed eyes.

Marius and Cosette never asked themselves whither this would lead them. They considered that they had already arrived. It is a strange claim on the part of man to wish that love should lead somewhere.

CHAPTER III.

THE BEGINNING OF SHADOW.

JEAN VALJEAN suspected nothing.

Cosette, who was not quite such a dreamer as Marius, was gay, and that sufficed to render Jean Valjean happy. Cosette's thoughts, her tender pre-occupations, and the image of Marius which filled her soul, detracted nothing from the incomparable purity of her splendid, chaste, and smiling brow. She was at the age when the virgin bears her love as the angel bears his lily. Jean Valjean was, therefore, at ease. And, besides, when two lovers understand each other, things always go well; any third party who might trouble their love is kept in a state of perfect blindness by a small number of precautions, which are always the same with all lovers. Thus Cosette never made any objections to Jean Valjean. Did he wish to take a walk? "Yes, dear little papa." Did he stay at home? Very good. Did he wish to spend the evening with Cosette? She was enchanted. As he always went to bed at ten o'clock, on those occasions Marius did not come to the garden till after that hour, when, from the street, he heard Cosette open the glass door leading to the steps. We need hardly say that Marius was never visible by day. Jean Valjean did not even remember that Marius existed. One morning, however, he happened to say to Cosette: "Why, the back of your dress is all white!" On the previous evening, Marius, in a transport, had pressed Cosette against the wall.

Old Toussaint, who went to bed early, thought of nothing but sleep, so soon as her work was done, and was as ignorant of the whole affair as Jean Valjean.

Marius never set foot in the house. When he was with Cosette they hid themselves in a niche near the steps, so that they might not be seen or heard from the street, and sat there, often contenting themselves, for sole conversation, with pressing each other's hand twenty times a minute, as they gazed at the branches of the trees. At such moments, had a thunderbolt fallen within thirty feet of them, they would not have noticed it, so profoundly was the revery of the one absorbed and plunged in the revery of the other.

It was a limpid purity, and the hours were all white, and nearly all alike. This kind of love is a collection of lily petals and dove's plumes.

The whole garden was between them and the street. Every time that Marius came in and out, he carefully replaced the bar of the gate, so that no disarrangement was visible. He generally left at midnight, and went back to Courfeyrac's lodgings. Courfeyrac said to Bahorel: —

"Can you believe it? Marius comes home nowadays at one o'clock in the morning."

Bahorel answered: —

"What would you have? There is always a bomb-shell inside a seminarist."

Sometimes Courfeyrac folded his arms, assumed a stern air, and said to Marius: —

"Young man, you are becoming irregular in your habits."

Courfeyrac, who was a practical man, was not pleased with this reflection of an invisible paradise cast on Marius He was but little accustomed to unpublished passions. He grew impatient, and now and then sum-

moned Marius to return to reality. One morning he flung this admonition at him: —

"My dear fellow, you make me feel just now as if you were a denizen of the moon, in the kingdom of dreams, the province of illusion, whose chief city is Soap-bubble. Come, be a good fellow. What is her name?"

But nothing could make Marius speak. His nails might more easily have been torn from him than one of the two sacred syllables which composed the ineffable name, *Cosette*. True love is luminous as the dawn, and silent as the tomb. Still, Courfeyrac found this change in Marius, that he possessed a radiant taciturnity.

During that sweet month of May, Marius and Cosette knew these immense pleasures: To quarrel and become reconciled; to talk at great length, and with the most minute details, about people who did not interest them the least in the world, — a further proof that in that ravishing opera which is called love, the libretto goes for almost nothing.

For Marius, it was heaven to listen to Cosette talking of dress; for Cosette, to listen to Marius talking politics, — to listen, knee against knee, to the carriages rolling along the Rue de Babylone; to look at the same planet in space, or the same glowworm in the grass; to be silent together, a greater pleasure yet than to talk, etc.

Still, various complications were approaching.

One evening, Marius was on his way to the meeting, along the Boulevard des Invalides. He was walking, as usual, with his head down. As he was turning the corner of the Rue Plumet, he heard some one say close to him: —

"Good-evening, Monsieur Marius.

He raised his head, and recognized Eponine.

This produced a singular effect upon him. He had not once thought of this girl since the day when she led

him to the Rue Plumet. He had not seen her again, and she had gone entirely out of his mind. He had only motives to be grateful to her; he owed her his present happiness; and yet it annoyed him to meet her.

It is an error to believe that passion, when it is happy and pure, leads a man to a state of perfection. It simply leads him, as we have shown, to a state of forgetfulness. In this situation, man forgets to be wicked, but he also forgets to be good. Gratitude, duty, and essential and important memories vanish. At any other time Marius would have behaved very differently to Eponine. Absorbed by Cosette, he had not even clearly comprehended that this Eponine was Eponine Thénardier, and that she bore a name written in his father's will,—that name for which he would so ardently have sacrificed his life but a few months before. We show Marius as he was. His father himself had slightly faded from his mind beneath the splendour of his love.

He replied with some embarrassment:—

"Ah, is it you, Eponine?"

"Why do you treat me so coldly? Have I done you any injury?"

"No," he answered.

Certainly he had no fault to find with her. Far from it. Still, he felt that he could not be familiar with Eponine, now that he loved Cosette.

As he remained silent, she exclaimed:—

"Tell me—"

Then she stopped. It seemed as if words failed this creature, who was formerly so heedless and so bold. She tried to smile and could not. She continued:—

"Well—"

Then she was silent again, and looked down on the ground.

"Good-night, Monsieur Marius," she suddenly said, and went away.

CHAPTER IV.

A TYKE[1] RUNS IN ENGLISH AND BARKS IN SLANG.

THE next day was June 3, 1832, a date to which we draw attention, on account of the grave events which were at that moment hanging over the horizon of Paris in the state of lightning-charged clouds. Marius, at nightfall, was following the same road as on the previous evening, with the same ravishing thoughts in his heart, when he saw between the trees on the boulevard, Eponine coming toward him. Two days running, — that was too much. He hurriedly turned back, left the boulevard, changed his course, and went to the Rue Plumet by the Rue Monsieur.

This led Eponine to follow him as far as the Rue Plumet, — a thing she had never done before. Hitherto, she had contented herself with watching him as he passed along the boulevard, without attempting to meet him. Last evening was the first time that she had ventured to address him.

Eponine followed him, then, without his suspecting it. She saw him move the gate-bar aside and step into the garden.

"Hullo!" said she; "he enters the house!"

She went up to the gate, felt the bars in turn, and easily distinguished the one which Marius had removed. She muttered in a low voice, and in melancholy accents: "None of that, Lisette!"

[1] Dog.

She sat down on the stone base of the fence, close to the bar, as if she were guarding it. It was exactly at the spot where the fence joined the next wall; and there was a dark corner there, in which Eponine was entirely concealed.

She remained thus for more than an hour, without stirring or breathing, absorbed in thought.

About ten o'clock at night, one of the two or three passers along the Rue Plumet, a belated old tradesman, who was hurrying along that deserted and ill-famed street, as he reached the gate, heard a low, menacing voice say: —

"I am not surprised now that he comes every evening."

The passer-by looked around him, saw nobody, did not dare to peer into that dark corner, and felt horribly alarmed. He redoubled his speed.

He was quite right to hasten; for a very few minutes later, six men, who were walking separately, and at some distance from each other, under the wall, and who might have been taken for a drunken patrol, entered the Rue Plumet.

The first who reached the garden gate stopped, and waited for the others. A second after, all six were together. They began to talk in whispers: —

"This is the crib," said one.

"Is there a tyke in the garden?" asked another.

"I don't know. In case there is, I 've made up a pill which he shall yam."[1]

"Have you got some mastic[2] to break a pane?"

"Yes."

"The gate is old," remarked the fifth man, who had the voice of a ventriloquist.

[1] Swallow.

[2] Bread. Bread softened and spread over the pane prevents any noise, and keeps the broken bits of glass from falling.

"So much the better," said the second speaker. "It won't give hot beef[1] under the saw, and won't be so hard to cut through."

The sixth, who had not yet opened his lips, began to examine the gate, as Eponine had done an hour before, grasping each bar in succession, and shaking it cautiously.

He thus reached the bar which Marius had loosened. Just as he was about to seize this bar, a hand, suddenly emerging from the darkness, clutched his arm. He felt himself roughly thrust back, and a hoarse voice whispered: "There 's a tyke."

At the same time he saw a pale girl standing in front of him.

The man felt that emotion which is always produced by the unexpected. His hair stood hideously on end. Nothing is more dreadful to look upon than a startled wild beast. Its terrified air is horrible. He shrank back and stammered: —

"Who is this she-devil?"

"Your daughter."

It was, in truth, Eponine who addressed Thénardier.

Upon her appearance, the other five — that is to say, Claquesous, Gueulemer, Babet, Montparnasse, and Brujon — approached noiselessly, without hurry, without a word, but with the sinister slowness peculiar to these men of the night.

Some strange and hideous tools were in their hands. Gueulemer held a pair of those crooked pliers which burglars call "scissors."

"Well, what are you doing here? What do you want? Are you mad?" exclaimed Thénardier, if it be possible to exclaim in a whisper. "What have you come here for, — to hinder us in our work?"

Eponine burst out laughing, and threw her arms

[1] Squeak.

around his neck. "I am here, my dear little pappy, because I am here. Is n't a body allowed to sit down on a stone nowadays? It is you who ought n't to be here. What did you come for, since it is a biscuit? I told Magnon so. There is nothing to be done here. But kiss me, dear pappy; it is such a time since I saw you! So you are out?"

Thénardier tried to free himself from Eponine's arms, and growled: —

"There, there, that 'll do; you have kissed me. Yes, I am out. I 'm not in. Now be off."

But Eponine did not loose her hold, and redoubled her caresses.

"My dear pappy, how ever did you manage? You must have been very clever to get out of that scrape. Do tell me all about it. And where is mamma? Give me some news of her."

Thénardier answered: —

"She 's all right. I don't know; leave me, and be off, I tell you."

"But I won't be off," said Eponine, with the pout of a spoiled child; "you send me away, though I have n't seen you now for four months, and I have scarcely had time to embrace you."

And she caught her father around the neck again.

"Oh, come, this is a bore!" said Babet.

"Make haste!" said Gueulemer; "the cops may come along."

The ventriloquist voice hummed this verse: —

"It is n't New Year's Day,
To peck at pa and ma, I say."

Eponine turned to the five ruffians: —

"Why, that 's Monsieur Brujon. Good-evening, Monsieur Babet; good-evening, Monsieur Claquesous. What!

don't you know me, Monsieur Gueulemer? How goes it, Montparnasse?"

"I should say they did know you!" cried Thénardier. "But now, good-night, good-night. Clear out! Don't bother us!"

"It is the hour for foxes, and not for chickens," said Montparnasse.

"Don't you see that we have a crib to crack here?" added Babet.

Eponine took Montparnasse by the hand. "Mind," he said, "you will cut yourself; I have an open chive."[1]

"My dear Montparnasse," Eponine replied very gently, "you must have confidence in people. I am my father's daughter, perhaps. Monsieur Babet, Monsieur Gueulemer, I am ordered to look into this affair."

It is remarkable that Eponine did not talk slang. Ever since she had known Marius, that frightful language had become impossible to her.

She pressed Gueulemer's great coarse fingers in her little bony hand, like that of a skeleton, and continued: "You know very well that I am no fool. People generally believe me. I have done you a service now and then. Well, I have made inquiries; you are running a needless risk. I swear to you that there is nothing to be done in this house."

"There are lone women," said Gueulemer.

"No, they have moved away."

"Well, the candles have n't, anyhow," remarked Babet. He pointed over the trees to a light which was moving about the garret. It was Toussaint, who had sat up late to hang some linen to dry.

Eponine made a final effort.

"Well," said she, "they are very poor people, and there is n't a copper in the house."

[1] Knife.

"Go to the devil!" cried Thénardier. "When we have turned the house topsy-turvy, and put the cellar at top and the attics at the bottom, we will tell you what there is inside, and whether they are cart-wheels,[1] rounders,[2] or fadges."[3]

And he thrust her aside that he might pass on.

"My good friend, M. Montparnasse," said Eponine, "I beg you,—you are a good fellow,—don't go in!"

"Take care, you 'll cut yourself," replied Montparnasse.

Thénardier remarked with that decisive accent of his:—

"Make tracks, titter, and leave men to do their work."

Eponine let go Montparnasse's hand, which she had again seized, and said:—

"So you intend to enter this house?"

"Rather," said the ventriloquist, with a grin.

Then she set her back to the gate, faced the six ruffians armed to the teeth, to whom night lent the faces of demons, and said in a firm, low voice:—

"Well, I don't intend that you shall."

They paused in amazement. The ventriloquist completed his grin. She continued:—

"Friends, listen to me. It 's my turn now. I 'm doing the talking. In the first place, if you enter this garden or touch this gate, I will scream, I will knock at doors, I will rouse everybody, I will have all six of you seized, and I 'll call the police."

"She would do it, too," Thénardier whispered to the ventriloquist and Brujon.

She shook her head, and added:—

"Beginning with my father."

Thénardier approached her.

[1] Francs. [2] Sous. [3] Liards.

" Not so close, my good man," she said.

He fell back, growling between his teeth : " Why, what is the matter with her ? " and he added, " the b——"

She burst into a terrible laugh : —

" As you please, but you shall not enter. I am not the daughter of a dog, for I am the child of a wolf. You are six, but what do I care for that ? You are men. Well, I am a woman. You won't frighten me, I can tell you. You shall not enter this house, because it does not please me to have you. If you come any nearer, I bark. I told you there was a dog, and I am that dog. I do not care a straw for you ; so go your way, for you annoy me ! Go where you like ; but don't come here, for I forbid it. You with your knives, and I with my wooden shoes ; it 's all one to me. Come on ! "

She advanced a step toward the bandits, and said, with the same frightful laugh : —

" Confound it ! I 'm not afraid. Oh, yes ; much you care ! This summer I shall be hungry, and this winter I shall be cold. What asses these men must be to think they can scare a girl ! What ! Scare ? Because you have dolls of mistresses who crawl under the bed whenever you talk big, I suppose ! But I 'm not afraid of anything, I tell you ! "

She fixed her eye on Thénardier, and said : " Not even of you, father. "

Then she continued, as she turned her spectral, blood-shot eyes on each of the ruffians in turn : —

" What do I care whether I am picked up to-morrow on the pavement of the Rue Plumet, killed by a blow from my father's chive, or whether I am found within a year in the nets at St. Cloud or the Isle of Swans, among old rotten corks and drowned dogs ! "

She was compelled to break off. She was attacked by

a dry cough; her breath came from her weak, narrow chest like a death-rattle.

She continued: —

"I have only to cry out, and people will come right away. You are six; but I am the whole world."

Thénardier made a movement toward her.

"Don't come near me!" she cried.

He stopped, and said gently: —

"Well, no, I won't come near you; but don't talk so loud. So you want to prevent us from working, daughter? And yet we must earn our living. Don't you care for your father any more?"

"Rats!" said Eponine.

"But we must live; we must eat — "

"Don't you wish you may get it?"

This said, she seated herself on the coping of the fence, and sang: —

"My arm is plump,
My leg well shaped;
Then why delay?"

She had her elbow on her knee, and her chin in her hand, and she swung her foot with a careless air. Her ragged gown displayed her thin shoulder-blades. The neighbouring street-lamp lit up her profile and attitude. Nothing more resolute or more surprising could well be imagined.

The six burglars, amazed and savage at being held in check by a girl, went under the shadow of the lamp and held council, with furious and humiliated shrugs. She, however, looked at them with a calm, stern air.

"There 's something the matter with her," said Babet, — "some reason for it. Can she be in love with the dog? And yet it 's a pity to miss this. Two women, an old cove who lives in a backyard, very decent curtains at

the windows. The old swell must be a Sheney.[1] I consider the job a good one."

"Well, you fellows go in," exclaimed Montparnasse. "Do the trick. I will stay here with the girl, and if she stirs —"

He flashed the knife, which he held open in his sleeve in the lamp-light.

Thénardier said not a word, and seemed ready for anything they pleased.

Brujon, who was a bit of an oracle, and who, as we know, "put up the job," had not yet spoken. He seemed thoughtful. He had the reputation of not sticking at anything, and it was notorious that he had plundered a police office out of sheer bravado. Moreover, he wrote verses and songs, which gave him great authority.

Babet questioned him:—

"Have you nothing to say, Brujon?"

Brujon was silent a moment longer, then he tossed his head in several different ways, and at length decided on speaking:—

"Look here. This morning I saw two sparrows fighting; to-night I stumble over a quarrelsome woman. All that is bad. Let us be off."

They went away. As they went, Montparnasse muttered:—

"All the same, if you had been agreeable, I would have strangled her."

Babet replied:—

"I would n't. I never hit a lady."

At the street corner they stopped and exchanged this mysterious dialogue in a low voice:—

"Where shall we sleep to-night?"

"Below Pantin."[2]

"Have you the key to the gate about you, Thénardier?"

[1] Jew. [2] Paris.

"I believe you."

Eponine, who did not take her eyes off them, saw them return by the road by which they had come. She rose and crawled after them along the walls and the houses. She followed them thus as far as the boulevard. There they separated, and she saw the six men plunge into the darkness, where they seemed to melt away.

CHAPTER V.

THINGS OF THE NIGHT.

AFTER the departure of the robbers, the Rue Plumet resumed its calm, nocturnal aspect. What had just taken place in that street would not have astonished a forest. The thickets, the coppices, the heather, the branches rudely interlaced, the tall grass exist in a sombre way. The savage swarm catches glimpses of the sudden apparitions of the invisible world. That which is below man distinguishes there, through the mist, what exists beyond man; and things unknown to us living beings confront each other in the night. Bristling and savage nature is startled by certain approaches in which it seems to feel the supernatural. The powers of darkness know each other, and maintain a mysterious mutual equilibrium. Teeth and claws fear that which they cannot grasp. Blood-drinking bestiality, voracious, famished appetites in search of prey, instincts armed with nails and jaws, which have for their source and object the stomach, glare and sniff anxiously at the impassive spectral form prowling about in a winding sheet, or erect in a vague, rustling robe, which seems to them to live with a dead and terrible life. These brutalities, which are only matter, have a confused fear of having to deal with the immense obscurity condensed in an unknown being. A black figure barring the way stops a wild beast short. The inmate of the cemetery intimidates and disconcerts the inmate of the cave; ferocious things are afraid of sinister things. Wolves shrink when they encounter a ghoul.

CHAPTER VI.

MARIUS BECOMES PRACTICAL ONCE MORE TO THE EXTENT OF GIVING HIS ADDRESS TO COSETTE.

WHILE this sort of dog with a human face was mounting guard over the gate, and six robbers fled before a girl, Marius was by Cosette's side.

The sky had never been more star-spangled and more charming, the trees more rustling, or the smell of the grass more penetrating. Never had the birds fallen asleep in the leaves with sweeter stir. Never had all the harmonies of universal serenity responded better to the inward music of the soul. Never had Marius been more enamoured, happier, or in greater ecstasy.

But he had found Cosette sad. She had been crying. Her eyes were red.

This was the first cloud in that marvellous dream.

Marius's first words were: "What is the matter with you?"

And she replied: "I will tell you."

Then she sat down on the bench near the steps, and while he took his seat tremblingly by her side, she continued:—

"My father told me this morning to hold myself in readiness, for he had business to attend to, and we were probably going away."

Marius shuddered from head to foot.

When we reach the end of life, death signifies departure. When we are at the beginning, departure means death.

For six weeks past, Marius had slowly and gradually taken possession of Cosette each day, — a perfectly ideal, but profound, possession. As we have already explained, in first love, men take the soul long before the body. At a later date they take the body before the soul, and sometimes they do not take the soul at all. The Faublas and the Prudhommes add: "Because there is no such thing;" but the sarcasm is, fortunately, a blasphemy. Marius, then, possessed Cosette as spirits possess; but he enveloped her with his entire soul, and he jealously seized her with incredible conviction. He possessed her smile, her breath, her perfume, the deep light of her blue eyes, the softness of her skin when he touched her hand, the charming mole on her neck, and all her thoughts. They had agreed never to sleep without dreaming of each other, and they had kept their word. He, therefore, possessed all Cosette's dreams. He looked at her incessantly, and sometimes touched lightly with his breath the little locks on the nape of her neck; and he declared that there was not one of those little hairs which did not belong to him. He contemplated and adored the things she wore, — her knot of ribbon, her cuffs, her gloves, her slippers, — like sacred objects of which he was the master. He thought that he was the lord of the pretty tortoise-shell combs which she wore in her hair, and he even said to himself, in the confused, low stammerings of dawning voluptuousness, that there was not a seam of her dress, not a mesh of her stockings, not a wrinkle in her bodice, which was not his. Beside Cosette he felt beside his own property, his own possession, at once his despot and his slave. It seemed as if they had so blended their souls, that if they had wished to take them back, it would have been impossible for them to tell them apart. "This is mine." — "No, it is mine." — "I assure you that you are mistaken. This is really I." —

"What you take for yourself is myself." Marius was something which formed a part of Cosette, and Cosette was something that formed a part of Marius. Marius felt Cosette live within him; to have Cosette, to possess Cosette, was to him no different from breathing. It was in the midst of this faith, this intoxication, this virginal, extraordinary, and absolute possession of this sovereignty, that those words: "We are going away," suddenly fell on him, and the stern voice of reality shouted: "Cosette is not thine!"

Marius awoke. For six weeks, as we said, he had been living outside of life. The words, "Going away," were a rude awakening.

He could not find a word to say. Cosette merely noticed that his hand was very cold. She said to him in her turn: —

"What ails you?"

He answered, in so low a voice that Cosette could hardly hear him: —

"I do not understand what you said."

She replied: —

"This morning my father told me to arrange all my little matters and hold myself ready, that he would give me his linen to put in a portmanteau, that he was obliged to take a journey, that we were going away, that we would take a large trunk for me and a small one for him, that all this was to be ready within a week, and that we might go to England."

"Why, it is monstrous!" exclaimed Marius.

It is certain that, at this moment, in Marius's mind, no abuse of power, no violence, no abomination of the most prodigious tyrants, no deed of Busiris, Tiberius, or Henry VIII. equalled in atrocity this one, — M. Fauchelevent taking his daughter to England because he had business there. He asked in a faint voice: —

" And when do you start? "

" He did not say when. "

" And when do you return? "

" He did not tell me. "

Marius rose and said coldly: —

" Cosette, will you go? "

Cosette turned upon him her beautiful eyes filled with agony, and answered, with a sort of bewilderment: —

" Where? "

" To England? Will you go? "

" What can I do? " said she, clasping her hands.

" Then you will go? "

" If my father goes. "

" So you are determined to go? "

Cosette seized Marius's hand, and pressed it without replying.

" Very well, " said Marius. " Then I shall go elsewhere. "

Cosette felt the meaning of this remark even better than she comprehended it. She turned so pale that her face became white in the darkness. She stammered:

" What do you mean? "

Marius looked at her, then slowly raised his eyes to heaven, and replied: —

" Nothing. "

When he looked down again he saw Cosette smiling at him. The smile of a woman whom we love has a brilliancy which is visible even at night.

" How foolish we are! Marius, I have an idea. "

" What is it? "

" Follow us if we go away! I will tell you where. Come and join me wherever I am. "

Marius was now thoroughly aroused. He had fallen back into reality. He cried to Cosette: —

" Go with you! Are you mad? Why, it would require

money, and I have none! Go to England! Why, I already owe, I don't know how much,— more than ten louis,— to Courfeyrac, one of my friends, whom you do not know. I have an old hat which is not worth three francs, a coat with buttons missing in front, my shirt is all torn, my boots let in the water, I am out at elbows. I have not thought of it for these six weeks past, and I did not tell you. Cosette, I am a wretch. You see me only at night, and you give me your love; were you to see me by day, you would give me a sou! Go to England! Why, I have not enough to pay for a passport!"

He threw himself against a tree, with his arms over his head, and his forehead pressed to the bark, feeling neither the wood that bruised his skin, nor the fever which made his temples throb, motionless, and ready to fall, like a statue of despair.

He remained for a long time in this state,— one might remain for an eternity in such abysses. At length he turned. He heard behind him a little stifled sound, soft and sad. It was Cosette sobbing. She had been crying for more than two hours beside Marius, as he mused.

He went to her, fell on his knees, and slowly falling prostrate, seized the tip of her foot, which peeped out from under her skirt, and kissed it.

She let him do so in silence. There are moments when a woman accepts, like a sombre and resigned deity, the worship of love.

"Do not weep," he said.

She murmured:—

"But perhaps I am going away, and you cannot come with me!"

He answered: "Do you love me?"

She replied by sobbing that paradisal word, which is never more charming than through tears: "I adore you."

He went on, in a tone which was an inexpressible caress: —

"Do not weep. Say, will you do so much for me as to dry your tears?"

"Do you love me?" said she.

He took her hand.

"Cosette, I have never pledged my word of honour to any one, because it frightens me. I feel that my father stands beside me. Well, I pledge you my most sacred word of honour that if you go away I shall die."

In the tone with which he uttered these words there was such calm and solemn melancholy that Cosette trembled. She felt that chill which is produced by the passing of a true and sombre thing. In her terror she ceased to weep.

"Now listen," said he; "do not expect me to-morrow."

"Why not?"

"Do not expect me till the day after to-morrow."

"Oh, why?"

"You will see."

"A day without seeing you! But that is impossible."

"Let us sacrifice a day to gain, perhaps, a whole lifetime."

And Marius added in a low voice, and aside: "He is a man who makes no change in his habits, and he has never received anybody except in the evening."

"What man are you talking about?" asked Cosette.

"I? I did not say anything."

"What do you hope, then?"

"Wait till the day after to-morrow."

"You wish it?"

"Yes, Cosette." She took his head between her two hands, standing on tiptoe to reach him, and tried to read his hope in his eyes. Marius added: —

"By the bye, you should know my address, for something might happen; one never knows. I live with my friend Courfeyrac, at No. 16, Rue de la Verrerie."

He felt in his pocket, took out a penknife, and scratched the address with the blade on the plaster of the wall. Meantime, Cosette had begun to gaze into his eyes again.

"Tell me your thought, Marius, for you have one. Tell it to me. Oh, tell it to me, so that I may pass a good night."

"My thought is this: it is impossible that God can mean to part us. Expect me the day after to-morrow."

"What shall I do till then?" said Cosette. "You are in the world, you come and go! How happy men are! But I shall remain entirely alone! Oh, I shall be so sad! What are you going to do to-morrow night, tell me?"

"I shall try something."

"Then I will pray to Heaven, and think of you until then, so that you may succeed. I will question you no more, as you do not wish it. You are my master. I will spend my evening to-morrow in singing that song from "Euryanthe," which you love, and which you heard one night outside my shutters. But you will come early day after to-morrow. I shall expect you at nightfall, at nine o'clock exactly. I warn you. Good heavens! how sad it is that the days are so long! You hear; I shall be in the garden on the stroke of nine."

"And I too."

And without a word, moved by the same thought, carried away by those electric currents which place two lovers in continual communication, both intoxicated with delight, even in their grief, they fell into each other's arms, without noticing that their lips met, while their upraised eyes, overflowing with ecstasy and full of tears, contemplated the stars.

When Marius left, the street was deserted. It was the

moment when Eponine followed the bandits into the boulevard.

While Marius dreamed with his head leaning against a tree, an idea had crossed his mind; an idea, alas! which he himself considered mad and impossible. He had formed a violent resolution.

CHAPTER VII.

AN OLD HEART AND A YOUNG HEART MEET.

FATHER GILLENORMAND, at this period, was well past his ninety-first birthday. He still lived with his daughter at No. 6, Rue des Filles du Calvaire, in the old house, which was his own property. He was, it will be remembered, one of those antique old men who await death erect, whom age bears down but does not bow, and whom even sorrow cannot bend.

Still, for some time past, his daughter had said: "My father is breaking." He no longer boxed the ears of the maid-servants, or banged the landing of the stairs so violently with his cane when Basque kept him waiting. The Revolution of July did not exasperate him longer than six months. He read almost with tranquillity, in the "Moniteur," this association of words: "M. Humblot-Conté, Peer of France." The truth is, the old man was filled with grief. He did not waver, he did not surrender (that was no more possible to his physical than to his moral nature); but he felt himself yielding inwardly.

For four years he had been awaiting Marius with a firm foot — that is really the expression — with the conviction that that wicked young scamp would ring at his door some day or other. Now he had begun to say to himself, in hours of depression, that if Marius made him wait much longer — It was not death that was unendurable to him; it was the idea that perhaps he should never see Marius again. This idea had never for an instant occurred to him until that day. Now it rose before him constantly, and chilled him to death. Absence, as ever happens in genuine and natural emotions, had only heightened the grandfather's love for the ungrateful boy who had gone away like that. It is on December nights, when the thermometer is almost down to zero that people think most of the sun. M. Gillenormand was, or fancied himself, utterly incapable of making a single advance to his grandson. "I would rot first!" he said to himself. He did not think himself at all in the wrong; but he thought of Marius only with profound tenderness and the dumb despair of an old man who is going down into the valley of shadows.

He was beginning to lose his teeth, which added to his sorrow.

M. Gillenormand, without confessing it to himself, however, for it would have made him furious and ashamed, had never loved a mistress as he loved Marius.

He had hung up in his room, opposite the foot of his bed, that it might be the first thing he saw on awaking, an old portrait of his other daughter, the one who was dead, Madame de Pontmercy, taken when she was eighteen. He studied this portrait incessantly. One day he happened to say, as he gazed at it:—

"I see the likeness."

"To my sister?" remarked Mlle. Gillenormand; "oh, certainly."

The old man added: "And to him, too."

Once, as he was sitting, with his knees together and his eyes almost closed, in a melancholy posture, his daughter ventured to say:—

"Father, are you still as angry as ever with —?" She stopped, not daring to go further.

"With whom?" he asked.

"That poor Marius?"

He lifted his aged head, laid his thin wrinkled fist on the table, and cried in his loudest and angriest tones:

"'Poor Marius,' you say! That gentleman is a scoundrel, a scamp, a vain little ingrate without heart or soul, a proud and wicked fellow!" And he turned away that his daughter might not see the tear in his eyes.

Three days later he interrupted a silence which had lasted four hours, to say to his daughter suddenly:—

"I have already had the honour to beg Mademoiselle Gillenormand never to mention his name to me."

Aunt Gillenormand gave up all attempts, and pronounced this profound diagnosis: "My father was never very fond of my sister after her folly. It is clear that he detests Marius."

"After her folly" meant "after she married the colonel."

Still, as may be conjectured, Mademoiselle Gillenormand failed in her attempt to substitute her favourite, the officer of lancers, for Marius. Théodule had met with no success. M. Gillenormand refused to accept the *quid pro quo*. An empty heart does not accommodate itself to a mere stop-gap. Théodule, on his side, while he scented the inheritance, felt a repugnance to the task of pleasing. The old gentleman bored the lancer, and the lancer offended the old gentleman. Lieutenant Théodule was gay, no doubt, but a gossip, frivolous but

vulgar; a high liver, but fond of bad company. He had mistresses, it is true, and he talked a good deal about them, it is also true; but then he talked ill of them. All his good qualities had some defect. M. Gillenormand was worn out with listening to his account of the love affairs that he had round about his barracks in the Rue Babylone. And then, Lieutenant Théodule sometimes called in uniform, with the tricolour cockade. This rendered him simply impossible. M. Gillenormand finally said to his daughter: "I have had enough of that Théodule. I have but little liking for a warrior in time of peace. You can receive him if you wish. For my part, I do not know but I prefer the slashers to the trailers of sabres. The clash of blades in battle is less dismal, after all, than the noise of scabbards on the pavement. And, then, to throw up one's head like a king of clubs, and to lace one's self like a woman; to wear stays under a cuirass, is doubly ridiculous. When a man is a real man, he holds himself equally aloof from braggadocio and affectation, — neither a bully nor a bandbox. Keep your Théodule for yourself."

In vain his daughter said to him: "After all he is your grandnephew." M. Gillenormand, who was a grandfather to the tips of his finger-nails, was nothing of a granduncle. The fact is, that as he was a man of sense, and had compared the two, Théodule only served to make him regret Marius the more.

On the evening of June 4, — which did not prevent Father Gillenormand from having an excellent fire on his hearth, — he had dismissed his daughter, who was sewing in the adjoining room. He was alone in his chamber, with its pastoral hangings, his feet on the andirons, half enveloped in his vast nine-leaved Coromandel lacquer screen, his elbow resting on a table, where two candles burned under a green shade, swal-

lowed up in his embroidered easy-chair, and in his hand a book, which he was not reading. He was dressed, according to his wont, as an "Incroyable," and resembled an old portrait by Garat. People would have run after him in the streets, but whenever he went out his daughter covered him up with a huge episcopal wadded cloak, which hid his dress. At home he never wore a dressing-gown, save when he got up and went to bed. "It makes a man look old," he was wont to say.

Father Gillenormand was thinking of Marius bitterly and lovingly; and, as usual, bitterness gained the upper hand. His incensed tenderness always ended by boiling over and turning into indignation. He had reached the stage when a man seeks to make up his mind and to accept that which rends his heart. He was explaining to himself that there was no longer any reason for Marius's return, that if he had meant to come home, he would have done so long before, and that all idea of it must be given up. He tried to accustom himself to the idea that it was all over, and that he should die without seeing that "gentleman" again. But his whole nature revolted. His aged paternity could not consent to this. "What!" said he, and this was his mournful burden, "will he not return?" His bald head had fallen on his breast, and he vaguely fixed a sad and irritated glance upon the ashes on his hearth.

In the very midst of this revery, his old servant Basque came in and asked:—

"Can you receive M. Marius, sir?"

The old man sat up, livid, and like a corpse which is roused by a galvanic shock. All his blood retreated to his heart. He stammered:—

"M. Marius — who?"

"I do not know," replied Basque, intimidated and disconcerted by his master's manner. "I did not see

him. It was Nicolette, who said to me just now: 'There is a young man here; say it is M. Marius.'"

Father Gillenormand stammered in a low voice: "Show him in."

And he remained in the same attitude, with hanging head and eye fixed on the door. It opened. A young man entered; it was Marius.

He paused in the doorway as if waiting to be asked in.

His almost wretched clothes could not be seen in the obscurity produced by the lamp-shade. Only his calm, grave, but strangely sorrowful face could be distinguished. It was several moments before Father Gillenormand, stunned by surprise and joy, could see anything but a bright light, as when an apparition rises before us. He was ready to faint; he saw Marius through a mist. It was really he; it was indeed Marius!

At length! After four years! He seized him entirely, so to speak, at a glance. He found him handsome, noble, distinguished, grown, a thorough man, with a proper attitude and a charming air. He longed to open his arms, to call the boy to him; his heart melted with rapture; affectionate words welled up and overflowed his bosom. At last all this tenderness burst forth and reached his lips, and through the contradiction which formed the basis of his character, harshness came forth. He said roughly:—

"What do you want here?"

Marius replied, with an embarrassed air:—

"Sir—"

Monsieur Gillenormand would have liked Marius to throw himself into his arms. He was dissatisfied both with Marius and himself. He felt that he was abrupt and that Marius was cold. It was an unendurable and irritating distress to the old gentleman to feel himself so tender and imploring within, and to be unable to be

otherwise than harsh externally. His bitterness returned. He interrupted Marius, in a crusty tone: —

"Then why did you come?"

The "then" meant "If you have not come to embrace me." Marius gazed at his grandfather, whose pallor made his face look like marble.

"Sir —"

The old gentleman resumed in a stern voice: —

"Have you come to ask my pardon? Do you recognize your error?"

He thought that he was putting Marius on the right track, and that "the boy" would give way. Marius shuddered, for it was a disavowal of his father that was asked of him. He lowered his eyes and replied: "No, sir."

"Well, then," impetuously exclaimed the old man, with sharp sorrow full of anger, "what do you want of me?"

Marius clasped his hands, advanced a step, and said in a weak, trembling voice: —

"Have pity on me, sir."

These words moved M. Gillenormand. Uttered sooner, they would have softened him; but they came too late. The old gentleman rose. He leaned with both hands on his cane. His lips were white, his head shook, but his lofty stature towered over the stooping Marius.

"Pity on you, sir! The young man asks pity of an old man of ninety-one! You are entering life, and I am leaving it. You go to the play, to balls, to the coffee-house, the billiard-table; you are witty, you please women, you are a pretty fellow, while I spit upon my logs in the middle of summer; you are rich with the only true wealth, while I have all the poverty of old age, infirmity, and isolation! You have your two-and-thirty teeth, a good digestion, a quick eye, strength, appetite,

health, gayety, a forest of black hair; I have not even my white hair left. I have lost my teeth, I am losing my legs, I am losing my memory; there are three names of streets which I incessantly confound, — the Rue Charlot, the Rue du Chaume, and the Rue St. Claude; that is what I have come to. You have the whole future before you, full of sunshine, while I am becoming blind, so far have I advanced into night. You are in love, — that is a matter of course, — while I am not beloved by a soul in the world; and yet you ask me for pity! Zounds, sir! Molière forgot that. If that is the way you barristers jest in the court-house, I compliment you most sincerely upon it. You are droll fellows."

And the nonagenarian added, in a serious and wrathful voice: —

"Well, now, what do you want?"

"I am aware, sir," said Marius, "that my presence here displeases you; but I have only come to ask one thing of you, and then I shall go away at once."

"You are a fool," said the old man; "who told you to go away?"

This was the translation of the tender words which lay at the bottom of his heart: "Why don't you ask my pardon, and throw your arms round my neck?"

M. Gillenormand felt that Marius would leave him in a few moments, that his harsh reception had offended him, and that his severity would drive him away. He said all this to himself, and it increased his grief. As his grief immediately turned to passion, his harshness grew the greater. He wished that Marius might understand; and Marius did not understand, which made the old gentleman furious. He continued: —

"What! you insulted me, your grandfather; you left my house to go the Lord knows whither; you broke your aunt's heart; you went away to lead a bachelor's

life (of course, that 's more convenient), to play the fop, to come home at all hours, to amuse yourself; you have given me no sign of life; you have incurred debts without even asking me to pay them; you have been a breaker of windows and a brawler; and at the end of four years you come to me, and you have nothing more to say to me than that!"

This violent way of forcing his grandson into tenderness only produced silence on the part of Marius. M. Gillenormand folded his arms,— a gesture which with him was peculiarly imperious,— and bitterly addressed Marius:—

"Let us put an end to this. You have come to ask something of me, you say! Well, what is it? Speak."

"Sir," said Marius, with the look of a man who feels that he is about to fall over a precipice, "I have come to ask your permission to marry."

M. Gillenormand rang the bell. Basque popped his head in at the door.

"Send my daughter here."

A second later the door again opened, and Mlle. Gillenormand did not enter, but showed herself. Marius was standing, silent, with drooping arms and the face of a criminal. M. Gillenormand was marching up and down the room. He turned to his daughter and said to her:—

"Nothing. This is M. Marius. Wish him good-evening. This gentleman desires to marry. There! Be off!"

The sharp, hoarse sound of the old man's voice announced a strange degree of fury within. The aunt looked at Marius in terror, seemed scarcely to recognize him, did not utter a syllable or make a sign, and disappeared before her father's breath more swiftly than a straw before the hurricane.

In the mean while M. Gillenormand had turned back and was again leaning upon the mantlepiece.

"You marry! At the age of one-and-twenty! You have settled all that! You have only my permission to ask,— a mere formality! Sit down, sir. Well, you have had a revolution since I had the honour of seeing you last. The Jacobins had the best of it. You must have been pleased. Are you not a republican since you became a baron? Those two things go famously together. The republic makes a fine sauce for the barony. Were you one of those decorated in July? Did you give your small aid to take the Louvre, sir? Close by, in the Rue St. Antoine, opposite the Rue des Nonaindières, there is a cannon-ball imbedded in the wall of a house three stories up, with this inscription, 'July 28, 1830.' Go and look at it. It produces a fine effect. Ah, your friends do very pretty things! By the way, are they not erecting a fountain on the site of the Duke de Berry's monument? So you wish to marry? Whom? May I, without indiscretion, ask who the lady is?"

He paused, and before Marius had time to answer, he added violently:—

"By the way, have you a profession? Have you made a fortune? How much do you earn by your trade as a lawyer?"

"Nothing," said Marius, with a sort of firmness and stern resolution.

"Nothing? Then you have nothing to live on but the twelve hundred livres which I allow you?"

Marius made no reply. M. Gillenormand continued:

"In that case, I presume that the young lady is wealthy?"

"Like myself."

"What? No dowry?"

"No."

" Any expectations ? "

" I think not. "

" Utterly destitute ! And what is the father ? "

" I do not know. "

" And what is her name ? "

" Mademoiselle Fauchelevent. "

" Mademoiselle Fauche — what ? "

" Fauchelevent. "

" Ptt ! " said the old gentleman.

" Sir ! " exclaimed Marius.

M. Gillenormand interrupted him, with the tone of a man who is talking to himself : —

" That is right ! One-and-twenty, no profession, twelve hundred livres a year, and the Baroness Pontmercy will go and buy a couple of sous' worth of parsley from the green-grocer. "

" Sir, " replied Marius, in desperation at the vanishing of his last hope, " I implore you, I conjure you, in Heaven's name, with clasped hands, sir, I throw myself at your feet, — permit me to marry her ! "

The old man burst into a strident, melancholy laugh, coughing and speaking at the same time : —

" The deuce ! Ah, ah, ah ! You said to yourself : ' I 'll go and see that old periwig, that absurd ass ! What a pity that I am not five-and-twenty yet ! How I would fling him a respectful summons ! How well I could get along without him ! Never mind, then, I 'd say to him : " Old fool, you are only too glad to see me. I feel inclined to marry Miss Lord-knows-who, the daughter of Mr. Lord-knows-what. She has no shoes, and I have no shirt ; that just matches. I am inclined to throw my career, my youth, my future, my life, to the dogs, and take a plunge into wretchedness with a wife round my neck. That is my idea, and you must consent ! ' And the old fossil will consent. Go on, my lad ; fasten your

paving-stone round your neck, marry your Pousselevent, your Coupelevent — never, sir never!"

"Father —"

"Never!"

Marius lost all hope at the tone in which that "never" was pronounced. He crossed the room slowly, with hanging head, tottering, and more like a dying man than one who is merely taking his leave. M. Gillenormand followed him with his eyes; and when the door opened and Marius was about to leave the room, he took four strides, with the senile vivacity of an impetuous and spoiled old man, seized Marius by the collar, pulled him back energetically into the room, threw him into an easy-chair, and said: —

"Tell me all about it."

It was that one word *father*, let fall by Marius, which produced this revolution. Marius stared at M. Gillenormand in amazement. M. Gillenormand's flexible features expressed nought now but a rough and ineffable good nature. The ancestor had given way to the grandfather.

"Well, come, speak; tell me of your love episodes, chatter, tell me everything. The devil! How stupid young men are!"

"Father!" repeated Marius.

The old gentleman's entire face lighted up with indescribable radiance.

"Yes, that is it! Call me father, and you 'll see!"

There was now something so gentle, so good, so open, and so paternal in this abruptness, that Marius, in the sudden transition from discouragement to hope, was, as it were, stunned and intoxicated. As he was seated near the table, the light of the candles fell on his seedy attire, which Father Gillenormand studied with astonishment.

"Well, father," said Marius.

"What!" M. Gillenormand interrupted, "have you really no money? You are dressed like a thief."

He felt in a drawer and pulled out a purse, which he laid on the table. "There! here are one hundred louis to buy a hat with."

"Father," Marius continued, "dear father, if you only knew how I love her! You cannot imagine it. The first time I saw her was at the Luxembourg, where she came to walk. At first, I paid no great attention to her; and then, I know not how it happened, I fell in love with her. Oh, how wretched it made me! I see her now, at last, every day at her own home; her father knows nothing about it. Just fancy, they are going away! We see each other at night in the garden; but her father means to take her to England, and then I said to myself: 'I will go and see my grandfather, and tell him all about it.' I should go mad first, I should die, I should have a brain fever, I should throw myself into the water. I absolutely must marry her, or else I shall go mad. That is the whole truth, and I do not think that I have left out anything. She lives in a garden with a fence, in the Rue Plumet. It is near the Invalides."

Father Gillenormand had seated himself radiantly at Marius's side. As he listened and enjoyed the sound of his grandson's voice, he at the same time enjoyed a prolonged pinch of snuff. At the words 'Rue Plumet,' he interrupted his inhalation, and allowed the rest of his snuff to fall on his knees.

"Rue Plumet! Did you say Rue Plumet? Let me think! Are there not barracks down there? Oh, yes, of course there are. Your cousin Théodule, the officer, the lancer, told me about it,—a girl, my dear fellow, a girl! By Jove, yes! Rue Plumet. That used to be called Rue Blomet. It all comes back to me now. I have

heard about that little girl behind the gate in the Rue Plumet. In a garden. A Pamela. Your taste is not bad. I am told she is very tidy. Between ourselves, I believe that ass of a lancer has courted her a bit. I do not exactly know how far matters have gone. But, after all, that is of no consequence. Besides, there is no believing him. He brags, Marius! I think it very proper that a young man like you should be in love. It becomes your age. I would sooner have you in love than a Jacobin. I would rather know you caught by a petticoat, ay, by twenty petticoats, than by Monsieur de Robespierre. For my part, I do myself the justice of saying, that, in the matter of *sans-culottes*, I never loved any one but women. Pretty girls are pretty girls, hang it all! There is no harm in that. And so the little one receives you behind her father's back, does she? That 's all right. I 've had affairs of the same sort myself, — more than one. Do you know what a man does in such cases? He does not regard the matter ferociously. He does not hurl himself into matrimony; he does not conclude with marriage and the mayor in his scarf. No, he simply behaves like a sharp fellow. He shows some common sense. Take your pleasure, mortals; do not marry. Such a young man goes to his grandfather, who is a good sort after all, and who always has a few rolls of louis in an old drawer. He says to him: 'Grandpapa, that's how matters stand;' and grandpapa says: 'That 's very simple. Youth must be happy, and old age must wear out.' I have been young, and you will be old. All right, my lad, you shall pay it back to your grandson. Here are two hundred pistoles. Go and amuse yourself, confound you! Nothing could be better! That is the way the matter should be arranged. A man does not marry, but that is no obstacle. You understand?"

Marius, petrified and incapable of uttering a word, shook his head in token that he did not.

The old gentleman burst out laughing, winked his aged eye, gave him a slap on the knee, looked him straight in the eye, with a mysterious and radiant air, and said with the tenderest possible shrug of the shoulder: —

"You goose! Make her your mistress!"

Marius turned pale. He had understood nothing of what his grandfather had been saying. This maundering about the Rue Blomet, Pamela, the barracks, the lancer, had passed before Marius like a dissolving view. Nothing of all this could refer to Cosette, who was a lily. The old gentleman was wandering. But this wandering had ended in words which Marius did understand, and which were a mortal insult to Cosette. The words, "make her your mistress," pierced the earnest young man's heart like a sword-blade.

He rose, picked up his hat, which lay on the floor, and walked to the door, with a firm, assured step. There he turned, made his grandfather a low bow, drew himself up again, and said: —

"Five years ago you outraged my father. To-day you have outraged my wife. I have nothing more to say to you, sir. Farewell!"

Father Gillenormand, who was stunned, opened his mouth, stretched out his arms, strove to rise, and before he could utter a word, the door had closed again, and Marius had disappeared. The old gentleman remained for some minutes motionless, and as if thunderstruck, unable to speak or breathe, as though a clenched fist were compressing his throat. At length he tore himself out of his easy-chair, ran to the door, so far as a man can run at ninety-one, opened it, and cried: —

"Help! help!"

His daughter appeared, and then his servants. He went on with a pitiful rattle in his throat: —

"Run after him! Catch him! How did I offend him? He is mad! He is going away! O Lord! O Lord! This time he will not return."

He went to the window which looked on the street, opened it with his trembling old hands, bent half his body out of it, while Basque and Nicolette held his skirts, and cried: —

"Marius! Marius! Marius! Marius!"

But Marius could not hear him, for at this very moment he was turning the corner of the Rue St. Louis. The nonagenarian raised his hands twice or thrice to his temples with an expression of agony, tottered back, and sank into an easy-chair, pulseless, voiceless, and tearless, shaking his head and moving his lips with a stupid air, with nothing left in his eyes or heart but a profound and gloomy something which resembled night.

BOOK IX.

WHERE ARE THEY GOING?

CHAPTER I.

JEAN VALJEAN.

THAT same day, about four in the afternoon, Jean Valjean sat alone on one of the most solitary slopes of the Champ de Mars. Either through prudence, a desire to reflect, or simply in consequence of one of those insensible changes of habits which gradually introduce themselves into the existence of every one, he very rarely now went out with Cosette. He had on his workman's jacket and gray canvas trousers; and his long-visored cap concealed his face.

He was calm and happy now by Cosette's side. What had startled and troubled him for a while had disappeared; but during the last week or fortnight, anxieties

of a fresh nature had sprung up. One day, while walking along the boulevard, he saw Thénardier. Thanks to his disguise, Thénardier did not recognize him. But after that, Jean Valjean saw him several times again; and he now felt certain that Thénardier was prowling about their neighbourhood. This was sufficient to make him form a firm resolve. Thénardier's presence meant every peril at once.

Moreover, Paris was not quiet. Political troubles had this inconvenient feature for any man who had anything in his life to hide, that the police had become very uneasy and suspicious; and while trying to track a man like Pepin or Morey, they might very easily discover a man like Jean Valjean.

He therefore resolved to leave Paris, and even France, and go over to England. He had warned Cosette. He hoped to be off within a week.

He sat upon the slope in the Champ de Mars, revolving in his mind all sorts of thoughts,— Thénardier, the police, the journey, and the difficulty of obtaining a passport.

From all these points of view, he was anxious.

Lastly, an inexplicable fact, which had just struck him, and with which he was still absorbed, added to his alarm. On the morning of that very day, he, the only person up in the house, and strolling in the garden before Cosette's shutters were open, suddenly perceived this line on the wall, probably scratched with a nail:

"16, Rue de la Verrerie."

It was quite recent; the marks in the old black mortar were white, and a bunch of nettles at the foot of the wall was powdered with fine fresh plaster.

It had probably been written during the night. What was it? An address? A signal for others, or a warning for himself?

In any case, it was evident that the privacy of the garden had been violated, and that strangers had entered it. He remembered the strange incidents which had already alarmed the household. His mind was at work on this subject. He took care not to say a word to Cosette about the line written on the wall, for fear of alarming her.

In the midst of his troubled thoughts he perceived, from a shadow thrown by the sun, that some one had paused on the crest of the hill immediately behind him.

He was just about to turn, when a folded paper fell on his knees, as if a hand had dropped it over his head. He took the paper, opened it, and read these words, written in large characters with a pencil: —

"CHANGE YOUR QUARTERS."

Jean Valjean rose hastily, but there was no one on the slope. He looked round him, and perceived a creature, bigger than a child and smaller than a man, dressed in a gray blouse and dust-coloured velveteen trousers, who was bestriding the parapet, and who then slipped down into the moat of the Champ de Mars.

Jean Valjean at once went home, quite lost in thought.

CHAPTER II.

MARIUS.

MARIUS had left M. Gillenormand's house in a wretched state. He had entered with very little hope. He came out with immense despair.

However, — those who have watched the first movements of the human heart will understand this, — the lancer, the officer, the fop, Cousin Théodule, had left no shadow on his mind. Not the slightest. The dramatic poet might apparently hope for some complications from this revelation, so abruptly made by the grandfather to the grandson. But what the drama would gain thereby, truth would lose. Marius was at that age when a man believes nothing that is wrong. Later comes the age when he believes everything. Suspicions are nothing but wrinkles. Early youth has none. What overwhelms Othello glides harmlessly over Candide. Suspect Cosette? Marius could more easily have committed a multitude of crimes.

He began to roam the streets, — the resource of those who suffer. He thought of nothing which he could afterward recall. At two in the morning he returned to Courfeyrac's lodging, and threw himself on his mattress full dressed. The sun was shining brightly when he fell asleep, with that frightful heavy slumber which allows ideas to come and go in the brain. When he awoke, he saw Courfeyrac, Enjolras, Feuilly, and Combeferre standing in the room with their hats on, all

ready to go out, and extremely busy. Courfeyrac said to him: —

"Are you coming to General Lamarque's funeral?"

It seemed to him as if Courfeyrac were talking Chinese.

He went out shortly after them. He put in his pockets the pistols which Javert had intrusted to him at the time of the affair of February 3, and which had remained in his possession. They were still loaded, and it would be difficult to say what obscure notion he had in his brain when he took them up. All day he wandered about, without knowing where. It rained at times, but he did not perceive it. He bought a half-penny roll for his dinner, put it in his pocket, and forgot it. It appears that he took a bath in the Seine without being conscious of it. There are moments when a man has a furnace in his brain. Marius had reached one of those moments. He hoped for nothing, feared nothing now. This step he had taken since the previous day. He awaited the evening with feverish impatience; he had but one clear idea left, — that at nine o'clock he should see Cosette. This last happiness was now his sole future. After that came darkness. At intervals, as he walked along the most deserted boulevards, he imagined that he heard strange noises in Paris. He thrust his head out of his revery, and said: "Can they be fighting?"

At nightfall, at nine o'clock precisely, he was at the Rue Plumet, as he had promised Cosette. When he reached the gate, he forgot everything. He had not seen her for eight-and-forty hours; he was about to see her again. Every other thought was effaced, and he felt only an extraordinary and profound joy. Those minutes in which men live ages always have this sovereign and wonderful property, that, at the moment when they pass, they fill the heart entirely.

Marius removed the bar and rushed into the garden. Cosette was not at the place where she usually waited for him. He traversed the thicket, and went to the niche near the terrace. "She is waiting for me there," he said. Cosette was not there. He raised his eyes, and saw that the shutters of the house were closed. He made the tour of the garden; the garden was deserted. Then he returned to the house; and, out of his senses with love, terrified, intoxicated, maddened by grief and anxiety, he rapped on the shutters, like a master who returns home at an evil hour. He rapped; he rapped again, at the risk of seeing the window open and the father's frowning face appear, and ask him: "What do you want?" This was nothing now compared with what he caught a glimpse of. When he had rapped, he lifted up his voice, and called Cosette. "Cosette!" he cried; "Cosette!" he repeated imperiously. There was no answer. All was over. There was no one in the garden; no one in the house.

Marius fixed his despairing eyes on that mournful house, which was as black, as silent as a tomb, and far more empty. He gazed at the stone bench on which he had spent so many adorable hours by Cosette's side. Then he sat down on the garden steps, his heart full of gentleness and resolution. He blessed his love in his heart, and said to himself that since Cosette was gone there was nothing left him but to die.

All at once he heard a voice, which seemed to come from the street, crying through the trees: —

"Monsieur Marius!"

He drew himself up.

"Hullo!" he said.

"Are you there, M. Marius."

"Yes."

"Monsieur Marius," resumed the voice, "your friends

are waiting for you at the barricade in the Rue de la Chanvrerie."

This voice was not wholly strange to him. It resembled Eponine's rough, hoarse accents. Marius ran to the gate, pulled aside the shifting bar, passed his head through the hole, and saw some one, who seemed to be a young man, running away in the gloaming.

CHAPTER III.

M. MABŒUF.

JEAN VALJEAN'S purse was useless to M. Mabœuf, who, in his venerable and childlike austerity, had not accepted the gift of the stars. He had not admitted that a star could coin itself into louis d'or. He had not guessed that what fell from heaven came from Gavroche. He carried the purse to the police station, as a lost article, placed by the finder at the disposal of claimants. The purse was really lost. We need hardly say that no one claimed it, and it did not help M. Mabœuf.

Moreover, M. Mabœuf had continued his downward course. The indigo experiments had succeeded no better at the Jardin des Plantes than in his garden at Austerlitz. The year before he owed his housekeeper her wages. Now, as we have seen, he owed his landlord his rent. The pawnbroker sold the plates of his "Flora," at the expiration of thirteen months, and some brazier had made stew-pans of them. When his plates were gone, as he could no longer complete the unbound copies of his "Flora," which he still possessed, he sold off illustrations and text to a second-hand bookseller, as "imperfect." Nothing was then left him of the labour of his whole life. He began to eat up the money produced by these last copies. When he saw that this poor resource was becoming exhausted, he gave up his garden, and let it run to waste. Before this, long before, he had given up his two eggs and the bit of beef which he ate from

time to time. He now dined on bread and potatoes. He had sold his last articles of furniture, then everything he had in duplicate in linen, clothes, and blankets, then his herbals and prints; but he still had his most precious books, among them being several of great rarity, such as the "Les Quadrins Historiques de la Bible," edition of 1560; "La Concordance des Bibles," of Pierre de Besse; "Les Marguerites de la Marguerite," of Jean de la Haye, with a dedication to the Queen of Navarre; the work on the "Duties and Dignity of an Ambassador," by the Sieur de Villiers Hotman; a "Florilegium Rabbinicum," of 1644; a Tibullus, of 1567, with the splendid imprint, "Venetiis, in œdibus Manutianis;" and, lastly, a Diogenes Laertius, printed at Lyons in 1644, which contained the famous variant of the Vatican Manuscript 411, of the thirteenth century, and those of the two Venetian *codices* 393 and 394, consulted with such fruitful results by Henri Estienne, and all the passages in Doric dialect, only to be found in the celebrated Twelfth-century Manuscript belonging to the Naples library. M. Mabœuf never had a fire in his room, and went to bed with the sun, in order not to burn a candle. It seemed as if he no longer had any neighbours, for they shunned him when he went out. He noticed it. The wretchedness of a child interests a mother, the wretchedness of a youth interests a maiden, but the wretchedness of an old man interests nobody. It is the coldest of all distresses. Still, Father Mabœuf had not entirely lost his childlike serenity. His eye acquired some vivacity when it settled on his books, and he smiled when he looked at the Diogenes Laertius, which was a unique copy. His bookcase with glass doors was the only piece of furniture which he had retained beyond what was indispensable. One day Mother Plutarch said to him:—

" I have no money to buy dinner."

What she called dinner consisted of a loaf and four or five potatoes.

" Can't you get it on credit? " said M. Mabœuf.

" You know very well that it is refused me."

M. Mabœuf opened his bookcase, looked for a long time at all his books in turn, as a father obliged to decimate his children would look at them before selecting, then took one up quickly, put it under his arm, and went out. He returned two hours later with nothing under his arm, laid thirty sous on the table, and said:

" Get dinner."

From this moment, Mother Plutarch saw a dark veil, which was never again lifted, settle upon the old man's candid face.

Next day, the day after that, and every day, it had to be done again. He went out with a book and returned with a piece of silver. As the second-hand dealers saw that he was compelled to sell, they bought for twenty sous, books for which he had paid twenty francs, sometimes at those very shops. Volume by volume, his whole library passed away. He sometimes said: " And yet I am eighty years old," as if he had some lurking hope that he should reach the end of his days ere he reached the end of his books. His sorrow grew, yet once he had a joy. He went out with a Robert Estienne, which he sold for thirty-five sous on the Quai Malaquais, and came home with an Aldus which he had bought for forty sous on the Rue des Grès. " I owe five sous," he said quite radiantly, to Mother Plutarch. That day he did not dine.

He belonged to the Horticultural Society. His poverty became known. The president of the Society called on him, promised to speak about him to the Minister of Agriculture and Commerce, and did so. " What do you

tell me?" exclaimed the minister; "I should think so! an old scholar! a botanist! an inoffensive man! We must do something for him." The next day, M. Mabœuf received an invitation to dine with the minister. Trembling with joy, he showed the letter to Mother Plutarch. "We are saved!" he said. On the appointed day he went to the minister's house. He saw that his ragged cravat, his long, square-cut coat, and his shoes varnished with the white of an egg astounded the footman. No one spoke to him, not even the minister. About ten o'clock in the evening, while still waiting for a word, he heard the minister's wife, a handsome woman in a low-necked gown, whom he had not dared to approach, ask: "Who can that old gentleman be?" He went home on foot at midnight, through the pouring rain. He had sold an Elzevir to pay for a hackney coach to go there.

He had fallen into the habit of reading a few pages in his Diogenes Laertius every evening before going to bed. He knew enough of Greek to enjoy the peculiarities of the text which he possessed, and he had no other pleasure. A few weeks passed away. All at once Mother Plutarch fell ill. There is one thing even sadder than to have no money to buy bread of the baker, and that is, not to have money to buy medicine of the apothecary. One night the doctor had ordered a most expensive potion. The disease was growing worse. A nurse was necessary. M. Mabœuf opened his book-case. There was nothing there. The last volume had departed. The only thing left him was the Diogenes Laertius.

He put the unique copy under his arm and went out, — it was June 4, 1832. He proceeded to Royal's successor, at the Porte St. Jacques, and returned with one hundred francs. He placed the pile of five-franc pieces on the old servant's table, and entered his bedroom without uttering a syllable.

At dawn, next day, he seated himself on the overturned post in his garden, and he might have been seen over the hedge the whole morning, motionless, with drooping head, and eyes vaguely fixed on the faded flower-beds. It rained every now and then. The old man did not seem to notice it.

In the afternoon, extraordinary noises broke out in Paris. They sounded like musket-shots and the clamours of a multitude.

Father Mabœuf raised his head. He saw a gardener passing, and asked: —

"What is the matter?"

The gardener, his spade on his back, replied, in the most tranquil tone: —

"It 's the riots."

"What do you mean by riots?"

"They are fighting."

"Why are they fighting?"

"The Lord only knows," said the gardener.

"In what direction?"

"Over by the arsenal."

Father Mabœuf went into the house, took his hat, mechanically sought for a book to place under his arm, found none, said: "Ah, true!" and went out with a wandering look.

BOOK X.

THE FIFTH OF JUNE, 1832.

CHAPTER I.

THE SURFACE OF THE QUESTION.

OF what is revolt composed? Of nothing and of everything. Of electricity slowly disengaged, of flame suddenly breaking out, of a wandering force, of a passing breath. This breath encounters heads that talk, brains that dream, souls that suffer, passions that burn, miseries which howl, and bears them away.

Whither?

At random, athwart the State, athwart the laws, athwart the prosperity and the insolence of others.

Irritated convictions, imbittered enthusiasms, aroused indignations, martial instincts suppressed, youthful courage exalted, generous blindness; curiosity, a love of change, thirst for the unexpected, the feeling which causes us to find pleasure in reading the announcement of a new piece, or in hearing the prompter's whistle at the theatre; vague hatreds, rancours, disappointments, every vanity which thinks that destiny has disappointed it; straightened circumstances, empty dreams, ambitions hedged about with difficulties, every man who hopes for some result from an overthrow; and lastly, at the very

bottom, the mob, that mud which is quick to take fire, — such are the elements of revolt.

The greatest and the most infamous; beings who prowl about beyond the pale of everything, awaiting an opportunity; bohemians, outcasts, highway vagabonds, the men who sleep o' nights in a desert of houses with no other roof than the cold clouds of heaven; those who daily demand their bread from chance, and not from toil; the unknown men of wretchedness and nothingness, the bare-armed, the bare-footed, belong to revolt. Every man who has in his soul a secret feeling of revolt against any act of the State, of life, or of destiny, is on the verge of riot; and so soon as it appears, he begins to quiver, and to feel himself borne away by the whirlwind.

Riot is a sort of waterspout in the social atmosphere which is suddenly formed in certain conditions of temperature, and which, in its eddyings, mounts, runs, thunders, tears, razes, crushes, demolishes, and uproots, bearing with it natures great and small, the strong man and the weak mind, the trunk of a tree and the wisp of straw. Woe to the man whom it bears away as well as to the one it strikes. It breaks the one against the other.

It communicates to those whom it seizes an indescribable and extraordinary power. It fills the first-comer with the force of events, it converts everything into projectiles. It makes a cannon-ball of an unhewn stone, and a general of a porter.

If we may believe certain oracles of crafty policy, a small amount of riot is desirable from the point of view of power. The idea is, that it strengthens those governments which it does not overthrow. It tests the army; it concentrates the middle classes; it strengthens the muscles of the police; it proves the power of the social frame-work. It is an exercise in gymnastics, almost in hygiene. Power feels better after a riot, as a man does after a good rubbing down.

Riot, thirty years ago, was also regarded from other standpoints.

There is for everything a theory, which proclaims itself as "common sense;" Philintus against Alcestis; a mediation offered between the true and the false; explanation, admonition, and a somewhat haughty extenuation which, because it is mingled with blame and apology, believes itself wisdom, and is often nothing but pedantry. An entire political school, called the "happy medium," has resulted from this. As between cold water and hot water, it is the lukewarm water party. This school, with its false depth, entirely superficial, dissecting effects without going back to first causes, from the heights of semi-science, blames the agitations of the public streets.

If we listen to this school, we hear: "The riots which complicated the deed of 1830 deprived that great event of a portion of its purity. The Revolution of July was a fine blast of the popular wind, suddenly followed by blue sky. The riots caused a cloudy sky to reappear. They forced that revolution, at first so remarkable for its unanimity, to degenerate into a quarrel. In the Revolution of July, as in all progress produced by fits and starts, there were secret fractures which the riots rendered perceptible. People then said: 'Ah, it is broken!' After the Revolution of July, men were only sensible of deliverance; after the riots they were conscious of a catastrophe.

"Every riot closes shops, depresses funds, throws the Stock Exchange into a state of consternation, suspends trade, checks business, and hastens bankruptcies; there is no money, manufactures are disconcerted, capital is withdrawn, labour is at a discount, there is fear everywhere, and counter-shocks occur in every city. Hence gulfs. It is calculated that the first day of a riot costs France twenty millions of francs, the second forty, and the third sixty. A three days' riot, costs one hundred

and twenty millions; that is to say, if we consider the financial result alone, it is equivalent to a disaster, a shipwreck, or a lost battle which should annihilate a fleet of sixty vessels of the line.

"Undoubtedly, riots, historically regarded, have a certain beauty. The war of paving-stones is no less grand or pathetic than the war of thickets; in the one there is the soul of forests, in the other the heart of cities. One has Jean Chouan, the other has a Joan. Riots throw a lurid but splendid light upon all the most original features of the Parisian character, — generosity, devotion, stormy gayety, students proving that bravery forms a part of intellect, the National Guard unswerving, bivouacs of shop-keepers, fortresses held by street-boys, contempt of death on the part of mere passers. Schools and legions came into collision. After all, there was only the difference of age between the combatants; they are the same race, — the same stoics who die for an idea at twenty, and for their family at forty. The army, ever sad in civil wars, opposed prudence to audacity. The riots, while proving popular intrepidity, educated the courage of the middle classes.

"That is all very well. But is all this worth the bloodshed? And to the bloodshed add the future darkened, progress compromised, anxiety among the better classes, honest liberals in despair, foreign absolutism delighted at these wounds dealt to revolution by its own hand, those conquered in 1830 triumphing and shouting: 'Did we not say so?' Add Paris possibly aggrandized, but France assuredly diminished. Add — for all must needs be told — the massacres which have too often dishonoured the victory of order grown ferocious, over liberty gone mad. The necessary conclusion is, riots have been fatal."

Thus speaks that approach to wisdom with which the middle classes, that approach to the people, are so readily contented.

For our part, we reject the word *riots* as too broad in its significance, and consequently too convenient. We make a distinction between one popular movement and another. We do not ask whether a riot costs as much as a battle. In the first place, why a battle? Here arises the question of war. Is war less a scourge than riot is a calamity? And, then, are all riots calamities? And suppose that July 14 did cost one hundred and twenty millions? The establishment of Philip V. in Spain cost France two billions. Even were the price the same, we should prefer the 14th of July. Besides, we reject these figures, which seem to be reasons, and which are only words. Given a riot, we examine it in itself. In all that the doctrinarian objection just presented says, the only question is of effect, and we are seeking for the cause.

We will be precise.

CHAPTER II.

THE BOTTOM OF THE QUESTION.

THERE is riot, and there is insurrection. These are two separate passions; one is wrong, the other right. In democratic States, the only ones founded on justice, it sometimes happens that the fraction usurps power; in that case, the whole people rises, and the necessary demand for its rights may go so far as to take up arms. In all questions resulting from collective sovereignty, the war of all against the fraction is insurrection; the attack of the fraction on the masses is a riot. According as the Tuileries contain the king or the Convention, they are justly or unjustly attacked. The same guns, pointed at the mob, are in the wrong on August 14, and in the right on the 14th Vendemiaire. Alike in appearance, but fundamentally different; the Swiss defend what is false, and Bonaparte what is true. What universal suffrage has done in its liberty and its sovereignty cannot be undone by the street. It is the same in matters pertaining purely to civilization; the instinct of the masses, clear-sighted yesterday, may be perturbed to-morrow. The same fury may be legitimate against Terray and absurd against Turgot. To smash engines, pillage store-houses, tear up rails, demolish docks, the false course of the multitude, the denial by the people of justice to progress, the assassination of Ramus by students, Rousseau stoned and expelled from

Switzerland, — all this is riot. Israel rising against Moses, Athens against Phocion, Rome against Scipio, is riot; Paris attacking the Bastille, is insurrection. The soldiers opposing Alexander, the sailors mutinying against Christopher Columbus, this is also revolt, — impious revolt. Why? Because Alexander did for Asia with the sword what Columbus did for America with the compass; Alexander, like Columbus, found a world. These gifts of a world to civilization are such increments of light that any resistance in such a case is culpable. Sometimes the people counterfeits fidelity to itself. The mob turns traitor to the people. Can anything, for instance, be stranger than the long and bloody protest of the "dealers in contraband salt," a legitimate chronic revolt which, at the decisive moment, on the day of salvation, and at the hour of popular victory, espoused the throne, turned into "chouannerie," and from an insurrection against the government, became a riot for it? These are gloomy masterpieces of ignorance! The dealer in contraband salt escapes from the royal gallows, and with the noose still round his neck, dons the white cockade. "Death to the taxes on salt" brings into the world "Long live the king!" The cutthroats of St. Bartholomew, the murderers of September, the massacrers of Avignon, the assassins of Coligny, the assassins of Madame de Lamballe, the assassins of Brune, Miquelets, Verdets, and Cadenettes, the companions of Jehu, and the knights of the white badge, — all this is riot. La Vendée is a grand Catholic riot. The sound of right in motion is clearly to be recognized; it does not always come from the trembling of agitated masses. There are mad furies and cracked bells; all tocsins do not give forth the sound of bronze. The commotion of passions and ignorances differs from the shock of progress. Rise, if you like, but only to grow. Show me in what direction you are going.

Insurrection is only possible in a forward direction; any other sort of uprising is bad. Every violent backward step is riot; to retreat is to assault the human race. Insurrection is an outburst of fury on the part of truth; the paving-stones which insurrection tears up emit the spark of right. They bequeath to riot only their mud. Danton rising against Louis XVI. is insurrection; Hébert against Danton is riot.

Hence it comes that if insurrection in given cases may be, as Lafayette said, the most holy of duties, riot may be the most fatal of crimes.

There is also some difference in the intensity of heat; insurrection is often a volcano, a riot often a fire of straw.

Revolt, as we have said, is sometimes found among those in power. Polignac is a rioter; Camille Desmoulins is a member of the government.

Insurrection is sometimes resurrection.

The solution of everything by universal suffrage being an absolutely modern fact, and all history anterior to that fact being, for four thousand years, filled with violated right and the suffering of nations, each epoch of history brings with it such protest as is possible to it. Under the Cæsars there was no insurrection, but there was Juvenal.

The *facit indignatio* takes the place of the Gracchi.

Under the Cæsars there is the Exile of Syene; there is also the man of the "Annals."

We will not refer to the great Exile of Patmos, who also overwhelms the real world with a protest in the name of the ideal world, who converts a vision into a vast satire, and casts on Rome-Nineveh, Rome-Babylon, and Rome-Sodom the flaming reflection of the Apocalypse. John on his rock is the sphinx on its pedestal. We may not understand him, for he is a Jew; he writes

in Hebrew. But the man who writes the "Annals" is a Latin, or, to speak more correctly, a Roman.

As the Neros reign in the black manner, they must be painted to match. Work produced by the graver alone would be pale; a concentrated biting prose must be poured in to bite the lines.

Despots are of some service to thinkers. Chained language is terrible language. The writer doubles and trebles his style when silence is imposed by a master on the people. There issues from this silence a certain mysterious fulness which filters into the thought and is congealed into bronze. Compression in history produces conciseness in the historian. The granitic solidity of certain celebrated prose is nothing but a pressure brought to bear by the tyrant.

Tyranny forces the writer to contractions of diameter, which are an increase of strength. The Ciceronean period, scarce sufficient for Verres, would be blunted on a Caligula. Though there is less breadth in the sentence, there is more intensity in the blow. Tacitus thinks with arm drawn back.

The honesty of a great heart, condensed in justice and truth, is annihilating.

We must observe, by the way, that Tacitus is not historically superimposed on Cæsar. The Tiberii are reserved for him. Cæsar and Tacitus are two successive phenomena, whose meeting seems to be mysteriously prevented by Him who regulates the entrances and exits in the stage-setting of the centuries. Cæsar is great; Tacitus is great. God spares these two grandeurs by not bringing them into collision. The judge, in striking Cæsar, might strike too hard, and be unjust. That is not the will of God. The great wars of Africa and Spain, the Cilician pirates destroyed, civilization introduced into Gaul, Britain, and Germany, — all this glory

covers the Rubicon. We have here a sort of delicacy on the part of Divine justice, hesitating to let loose on the illustrious usurper the formidable historian, saving Cæsar from the sentence of Tacitus, and granting extenuating circumstances to genius.

Assuredly, despotism remains despotism, even under the despot of genius. There is corruption under illustrious tyrants, but the moral plague is more hideous still under infamous tyrants. In such reigns, nothing veils the shame; and exemplars, Tacitus as well as Juvenal, buffet this ignominy which has no reply to make, more usefully when in the presence of the human race.

Rome smells worse under Vitellius than under Sylla. Under Claudius and Domitian, there is a deformity of baseness corresponding to the ugliness of the tyrant. The foulness of slaves is the direct product of the despot; a miasma exhales from those crouching consciences in which the master is reflected; public powers are unclean; hearts are small, consciences dull, and souls vermin. This is the case under Caracalla, Commodus, and Heliogabalus; while from the Roman senate under Cæsar there issues only the odour of carrion peculiar to the eyries of eagles.

Hence the advent apparently tardy, of the Juvenals and Tacituses; the demonstrator steps in at the hour for the experiment to be performed.

But Juvenal and Tacitus, like Isaiah in Biblical times and Dante in the Middle Ages, is the individual man; riot and insurrection are the multitude, which is sometimes right, sometimes wrong.

In most cases, riot issues from some material fact; insurrection is always a moral phenomenon. Riot is Masaniello; insurrection is Spartacus. Insurrection is related to mind, riot to the stomach; Gaster is irritated, but Gaster is certainly not always in the wrong. In

questions of famine, riot, at Buzançais, for instance, has a true, pathetic, and just starting-point. Yet it remains a riot. Why? Because, though right in the abstract, it is wrong in form. Ferocious though legitimate, violent though strong, it struck at random; it crushed things in its passage like a blind elephant; it left behind it the corpses of old men, women, and children; it shed, without knowing why, the blood of the inoffensive and the innocent. To feed the people is a good end; to massacre them is a bad means to that end.

All armed protests, even the most legitimate, even August 10 and July 14, set out with the same disturbance. Before right is disengaged there are tumult and froth. At the outset, an insurrection is a riot, just as a river is a torrent. It generally leads to that ocean, Revolution. Sometimes, however, insurrection, coming from those lofty mountains which command the moral horizon, — justice, wisdom, reason, and right, — formed of the purest snow of the ideal, after a long fall from rock to rock, after reflecting the sky in its transparency, and swollen by a hundred confluents in the majestic mien of triumph, is suddenly lost in some common-place bog, as the Rhine is in a swamp.

All this belongs to the past. The future is another thing. Universal suffrage has this admirable point, it dissolves riot in its origin; and by giving insurrection a vote, deprives it of its weapon. The disappearance of war, street war as well as frontier war, — such is the inevitable course of affairs. Whatever To-day may be, To-morrow must be peace.

However, the middle classes, properly so called, make but a slight distinction between insurrection, riot, and the shades of difference between the two. To them everything is sedition, rebellion, pure and simple, — the revolt of the dog against his master, an attempt to bite, which

must be punished with the chain and kennel, barking, snapping, until the day when the dog's head, suddenly enlarged, stands out vaguely in the shadow with a lion's face. Then the middle classes shout: "Long live the people!"

This explanation given, what does the movement of 1832 mean in history? Is it a riot or an insurrection?

It is an insurrection.

It may happen that in the course of this narrative of a tremendous event, we may sometimes use the word *riot*, but only to distinguish superficial facts, and always maintaining the distinction between riot, the form, and insurrection, the basis.

This movement of 1832 had, in its rapid explosion and mournful extinction, so much grandeur, that even those who regard it as only a riot, speak of it respectfully. To them, it is like a remnant of 1830. Excited imaginations, as they say, cannot be calmed in a day. A revolution is not to be cut short. It must needs have a few undulations before it returns to a state of rest, like a mountain sinking into the plain. There are no Alps without a Jura, no Pyrenees without Asturias.

This pathetic crisis of contemporary history, which the memory of the Parisians calls the "time of the riots," is assuredly a characteristic hour among the stormy hours of this century. One last word before we enter on the recital.

The facts which we are about to relate belong to that dramatic and living reality which the historian sometimes neglects for want of time and space. They nevertheless contain, we insist upon it, life, palpitation, and human tremor. Small details, as we think we have said, are, so to speak, the foliage of great events, and are lost in the distance of history. The period called the riots abounds in details of this nature. Judicial inquiries, for

other than historic reasons, have not revealed everything, or perhaps sounded everything. We are, therefore, about to bring to light, together with details already known and published, things which are not known, and facts over which the forgetfulness of some and the death of others have passed. Most of the actors in these gigantic scenes have disappeared. On the day after, they held their tongues; but we may say of what we are about to narrate: "We saw this." We change a few names, for history recounts and does not denounce; but we shall paint true things. The nature of our book allows us to display only one side and one episode, and assuredly the least known, of the days of June 5 and 6, 1832; but we shall do so in such a way that the reader may catch a glimpse, beneath the dark veil which we are about to lift, of the real face of that frightful public adventure.

CHAPTER III.

A BURIAL: OPPORTUNITY TO BE BORN AGAIN.

IN the spring of 1832, although for three months cholera had chilled all spirits, and cast a sort of dull calm over their agitation, Paris had long been ripe for commotion.

As we have said, the great city is like a piece of artillery. When it is loaded, a spark need only fall and the gun goes off. In June, 1832, the spark was the death of General Lamarque.

Lamarque was a man of renown and of action.

He had displayed in succession, under the Empire and the Restoration, the two forms of bravery necessary for the two epochs, — the bravery of the battle-field and the bravery of the tribune. He was eloquent as he had been valiant; his words were as keen as his sword. Like Foy, his predecessor, after upholding the command, he upheld liberty. He sat between the Left and the extreme Left, beloved by the people because he accepted the chances of the future, and beloved by the mob because he had served the Emperor well. He was with Gérard and

Drouet, one of Napoleon's marshals *in petto*. The treaties of 1815 affected him like a personal insult. He hated Wellington with outspoken hatred, which pleased the multitude; and for the last seventeen years, scarcely paying attention to intermediate events, he had majestically nursed his grief for Waterloo. In his dying hour he pressed to his heart a sword presented to him by the officers of the Hundred Days. Napoleon died uttering the word *army;* Lamarque died pronouncing the word *country.*

His death, which was expected, was dreaded by the people as a loss, and by the government as an opportunity. His death caused universal mourning. Like everything which is bitter, mourning may turn into revolt. This really happened.

On the previous evening, and on the morning of June 5, the day fixed for the interment of Lamarque, the Faubourg St. Antoine, close to which the procession would pass, assumed a fearful aspect. That tumultuous network of streets was filled with rumours. People armed themselves as best they could. Joiners took the vice from their bench "to break in doors." One of them made a dagger of a stocking-weaver's hook, by breaking off the hook and sharpening the stump. Another, in his fever "to attack," slept for three nights in his clothes. A carpenter named Lombier met a mate, who asked him: "Where are you going?" — "Why, I have no weapon." — "What then?" — "I am going to my shop to fetch my compasses." — "What for?" — "I don't know," said Lombier. A certain Jacqueline, a shipping agent, accosted some workmen who were passing: "Come along with me." He paid for a pint of wine, and asked: "Have you work?" — "No." — "Go to Filspierre's, between the Montreuil and Charrone barriers, and you will find work." At Filspierre's they found cartridges and arms. Certain

well-known leaders went the rounds, that is to say, ran from one house to another, to collect their followers. At Barthelemy's, near the Barrière du Trone, and at Capel's tavern, the Petit Chapeau, the drinkers accosted each other with a serious air. They were heard saying: "Where is your pistol?" — "Under my blouse; and yours?" — "Under my shirt." In the Rue Traversière in front of Roland's workshop, and in the yard of the Burnt House, before the workshop of Bernier, the tool-maker, groups stood whispering. The most ardent among them was one Mavot, who never stopped longer than a week at any shop, his masters always discharging him, "because they were obliged to argue with him every day." Mavot was killed next day at the barricade in the Rue Menilmontant. Pretot, who was also destined to die in the struggle, seconded Mavot, and replied to the question: "What is your object?" — "Insurrection." Workmen assembled at the corner of the Rue de Berry, awaiting one Lemarin, revolutionary agent for the Faubourg St. Marceau. Passwords were exchanged almost publicly.

On June 5, then, a day of sunshine and shower, the funeral procession of General Lamarque passed through Paris with official military pomp, somewhat increased out of precaution. Two battalions with muffled drums and reversed arms, ten thousand of the National Guard with their sabres at their side, and the batteries of the artillery of the National Guard, escorted the coffin. The hearse was drawn by young men. The officers of the Invalides followed immediately after, bearing laurel branches. Then came a countless, strange, and agitated multitude, — the sectarians of the Friends of the People, the law school, the medical school, refugees of all nations, Spanish, Italian, German, Polish flags, tricoloured horizontal flags, every possible sort of banner, children

waving green branches, stone-cutters and carpenters out on a strike at this very time, printers, easily recognized by their paper caps, marching two and two, three and three, uttering cries, nearly all of them brandishing sticks, some of them brandishing sabres, without order, and yet with but a single soul, at one moment a mob, at another a column. Squads selected their chiefs. A man armed with a brace of pistols, which he carried openly, seemed to pass in review others, whose files made way for him. On the sidewalks of the boulevards, in the branches of the trees, in balconies, at windows, and on roofs, swarmed the heads of men, women, and children. All eyes were full of anxiety. An armed crowd passed, and a terrified crowd looked on.

The government, on its side, was taking observations, with its hand on its sword-hilt. Four squadrons of carbineers, mounted, with their trumpeters at their head, with their cartridge-boxes filled, and their muskets loaded, waited in the Place Louis XV.; in the Latin Quarter, and at the Jardin des Plantes, the municipal guard were echelonned from street to street. At the Halle-aux-Vins was a squadron of dragoons; at the Grève one-half of the 12th Light Infantry, while the other half was at the Bastille. The 6th Dragoons were at the Celestins. The court of the Louvre was crammed with artillery. The rest of the troops were confined to barracks, without counting the regiments in the environs of Paris. The alarmed authorities held suspended over the threatening multitude twenty-four thousand soldiers in the city, and thirty thousand in the suburbs.

Various rumours circulated in the procession. Legitimist intrigues were suggested. Some spoke of the Duke of Reichstadt, whom God had marked out for death at the very moment when the crowd designated him for emperor. A person, whose identity was never discov-

ered, announced that at the appointed hour two overseers who had been won over would open the doors of a small-arm factory to the people. Enthusiasm blended with despondency was visible on the uncovered brows of most of those present. Here and there, too, in that multitude, suffering from so many violent but noble emotions, might be seen truly criminal faces and ignoble mouths, which muttered: "Let us plunder!" Some agitations stir up the bottom of the marsh and bring clouds of mud to the surface of the water. This is a phenomenon familiar to "well-drilled" police.

The procession proceeded, with feverish slowness, from the house of death along the boulevards to the Bastille. It rained at intervals. The rain produced no effect on that crowd. Several incidents, such as the coffin carried round the Vendôme column, stones thrown at the Duke of Fitzjames, who was seen on a balcony with his hat on his head, the Gallic cock torn from a popular flag and dragged in the mud, a policeman wounded by a sword-thrust at the Porte St. Martin, an officer of the 12th Light Infantry saying aloud: "I am a republican," the Polytechnic School coming up, although ordered to remain indoors, and cries of "Long live the Polytechnic School!" "Long live the republic!" marked the passage of the procession. At the Bastille, long files of curious and formidable spectators, coming from the Faubourg St. Antoine, effected a junction with the procession, and a certain terrible ebullition began to agitate the crowd.

A man was heard saying to another: "You see that fellow with the red beard; he will give the word when it is time to fire." It seems that this red beard reappeared, invested with the same functions in a later riot, — the Quenisset affair.

The hearse passed the Bastille, followed the canal,

crossed the small bridge, and reached the esplanade of the Austerlitz bridge, where it halted. At this moment a bird's-eye view of the crowd would have presented the appearance of a comet, whose head was on the esplanade and whose tail lay along the boulevard as far as the Porte St. Martin. A circle was formed round the hearse The vast throng was hushed. Lafayette spoke, and bade Lamarque farewell. It was a touching and august instant; all heads were uncovered, and all hearts beat high.

All at once a man on horseback, dressed in black, appeared in the middle of the group with a red flag,— some say, with a pike surmounted by a red liberty cap. Lafayette turned away his head. Excelmans left the procession.

This red flag aroused a storm, and disappeared in it. From the Boulevard Bourdon to the Austerlitz bridge one of these clamours which resemble billows stirred the multitude. Two prodigious shouts went up: "Lamarque to the Pantheon! Lafayette to the Hotel de Ville!" Some young men, amid the acclamations of the crowd, set to work to drag Lamarque in the hearse over the Austerlitz bridge, and Lafayette in a hackney coach along the Quai Morland.

In the crowd that surrounded and applauded Lafayette, people noticed and pointed out to each other a German named Ludwig Snyder, who has since died a centenarian, who had also fought in the war of 1776, at Trenton, under Washington, and at Brandywine under Lafayette.

Meantime, the municipal cavalry galloped along the left bank to bar all passage of the bridge, while on the right the dragoons came from the Celestins and deployed along the Quai Morland. The people who were drawing Lafayette suddenly perceived them at the corner of the quay, and cried: "The dragoons!" The troops advanced

at a walk, silently, with their pistols in the holsters, their swords in their scabbards, their muskets slung in their leather sockets, with an air of gloomy expectation.

Two hundred yards from the little bridge they halted; the coach in which Lafayette sat approached them, their ranks opened and allowed it to pass, then closed up again. At this moment the dragoons and the crowd came in contact. Women fled in terror. What took place during that fatal minute? No one can say. It is the dark moment when two clouds meet. Some say that a bugle-call sounding the charge was heard in the direction of the Arsenal, others that a dragoon was stabbed with a knife by a lad. The fact is, that three shots were suddenly fired. The first killed Major Cholet, the second an old deaf woman who was closing her window in the Rue Contrescarpe, while the third singed an officer's shoulder. A woman cried: "They have begun too soon!" and all at once a squadron of dragoons, which had remained in barracks until then, was seen galloping up on the opposite side with drawn swords, sweeping everything before them.

That was the signal; the tempest was unchained, stones showered, the fusillade burst forth. Many rushed to the water's edge, and crossed the small arm of the Seine, which is now filled in. The timber-yards on Isle Louviers, that ready-made citadel, bristled with combatants; stakes were pulled up, pistols were fired, a barricade begun. The young men, driven back, crossed the Austerlitz bridge with the hearse at a run, and charged the municipal guard. The carbineers galloped up, the dragoons cut and slashed, the crowd dispersed in all directions; a rumour of war fled to all four corners of Paris. Men cried: "To arms!" They ran, overthrew, fled, and resisted. Passion spread the riot as the wind does fire.

CHAPTER IV.

THE EBULLITIONS OF OTHER DAYS.

NOTHING is more extraordinary than the first swarming of a riot. Everything breaks out everywhere at once. Was it foreseen? Yes. — Was it prepared? No. Whence does it issue? From the pavements. — Whence does it fall? From the clouds. Here, insurrection has the character of a plot; there, of an improvisation. The first-comer grasps a current of the mob, and leads it whither he pleases. It is a beginning full of terror, with which a sort of horrible gayety is mingled. First, there are clamours. Shops are closed, and the goods disappear from the tradesmen's windows. Then come isolated shots. People fly. Doors are battered with the butts of muskets. Servant-maids laugh in the courtyards of the houses, and say: "There 's going to be a row!"

A quarter of an hour had not elapsed when this was what was going on simultaneously at twenty different points in Paris: —

In the Rue St. Croix de la Bretonnerie, twenty young men, with beards and long hair, entered a wine-shop, and came out a moment later, carrying a horizontal, tricoloured flag covered with crape; at their head three men armed, one with a sabre, the second with a gun, and the third with a pike.

In the Rue des Nonaindières, a well-dressed tradesman, with a big stomach, a sonorous voice, a bald head, a lofty forehead, a black beard, and one of those rough

mustaches which cannot be kept from bristling, publicly offered cartridges to passers-by.

In the Rue St. Pierre Montmartre, bare-armed men carried about a black flag, on which were these words, in white letters: "Republic or Death!" In the Rue des Jeûneurs, Rue du Cadran, Rue Montorgueil, and Rue Mandar, groups appeared waving flags, on which could be distinguished the word *section* in gold letters, with a number. One of these flags was red and blue, with an imperceptible stripe of white between.

A small-arm factory, on the Boulevard St. Martin, and three gunsmiths' shops, one on the Rue Beaubourg, the second in the Rue Michel le Comte, the third in the Rue du Temple, were plundered. In a few minutes the thousand hands of the mob had seized and carried off two hundred and thirty guns, nearly all double barrelled, sixty-four sabres, and eighty-three pistols. In order to arm as many persons as possible, one man took the musket, another the bayonet.

Opposite the Quai de la Grève, young men armed with muskets stationed themselves in the rooms of some women in order to fire. One of them had a flint-lock gun. They rang, went in, and began making cartridges. One of the women said afterward: "I did not know what cartridges were till my husband told me."

A crowd broke into a curiosity-shop on the Rue des Vieilles-Haudriettes, and took from it yataghans and Turkish weapons.

The corpse of a mason killed by a bullet lay in the Rue de la Perle.

And then, on the right bank, the left bank, on the quays, on the boulevards, in the Latin Quarter, and in the quarter of the Markets, panting men, workmen, students, and sectarians read proclamations, shouted: "To arms!" broke street-lanterns, unharnessed vehicles, tore

up pavements, broke in the doors of houses, uprooted trees, searched cellars, rolled out barrels, heaped up paving-stones, furniture, and planks, and formed barricades.

Citizens were forced to lend a hand. The rioters went to the women, compelled them to surrender the sabre and musket of their absent husbands, and then wrote on the door with whiting: "The arms have been delivered up." Some signed "their own names" to receipts for muskets and sabres, and said, "Send for them to-morrow at the mayoralty." Isolated sentries and National Guards, on their way to the Town Hall, were disarmed in the streets. Epaulets were torn from officers. In the Rue du Cimitière St. Nicholas, an officer of the National Guard, pursued by a party armed with sticks and foils, with great difficulty found refuge in a house, where he was compelled to remain till night, when he went away in disguise.

In the Quartier St. Jacques, the students came from their lodgings in swarms, and went up the Rue St. Hyacinthe to the Café du Progrès or down to the Café des Sept Billiards in the Rue des Mathurins. There, before the doors, the young men stood on stone posts and distributed arms. The timber-yard in the Rue Transnonain was pillaged to make barricades. At one spot, only, did the inhabitants offer resistance,— at the corner of the Rue St. Avoye and Simon-le-Franc, where they themselves destroyed the barricade. At one point only, too, did the insurgents give way. They abandoned a barricade begun in the Rue du Temple, after firing at a detachment of the National Guard, and fled along the Rue de la Corderie. The detachment picked up on the barricade a red flag, a packet of cartridges, and three hundred pistol balls. The National Guards tore up the flag and carried off the tatters on the point of their bayonets.

All that we are describing here, slowly and succes-

sively, took place simultaneously in all parts of the city, in the midst of a vast tumult, like a number of lightning flashes in a single peal of thunder. In less than an hour, twenty-seven barricades sprang from the ground in the quarter of the Markets alone. In the centre was that famous house No. 50, which was the fortress of Joan and her hundred-and-six companions, and which, flanked on one side by a barricade at St. Merry, and on the other by a barricade in the Rue Maubuée, commanded the three streets, the Rue des Arcis, Rue St. Martin, and Rue Aubry le Boucher, the last of which it faced. Two barricades at right angles extended, one from the Rue Montorgueil to the Grand Truanderie, the other from the Rue Geoffroy-Langevin to the Rue St. Avoye; to say nothing of innumerable barricades in twenty other districts of Paris, in the Marais and the Montagne St. Geneviève,— one in the Rue Menilmontant, where there was a door which had been torn off its hinges, another near the little bridge of the Hotel Dieu, made of a carriage, overthrown and unharnessed, three hundred yards from the police-station.

At the barricade in the Rue des Ménétriers, a well-dressed man distributed money to the artisans. At the barricade in the Rue Grenetat, a horseman rode up and handed to the man who seemed to be chief of the barricade a roll, which looked like money. "Here," he said, "is something to pay expenses,— wine, etc." A light-haired young man, without a cravat, went from one barricade to another, carrying the passwords. Another, with drawn sword and a blue forage-cap on his head, stationed sentries. In the interior, beyond the barricades, wine-shops and taverns were turned into guard-rooms. Moreover, the riot was managed in accordance with the most skilful military tactics. The narrow, uneven, winding streets, full of corners and turnings,

were admirably chosen,—the vicinity of the Markets, more especially, a network of streets more tangled than a forest. The Society of the Friends of the People had, it was said, taken the direction of the insurrection in the St. Avoye district. A plan of Paris was found on the body of a man killed in the Rue du Ponceau.

That which had really assumed the direction of the revolt was a sort of strange impetuosity which was in the air. The insurrection had suddenly built barricades with one hand, and with the other seized nearly all the garrison posts. In less than three hours the insurgents like a powder-train fired, had seized and occupied on the right bank the Arsenal, the mayoralty in the Place Royal, the Marais, the Popincourt arms factory, the Galiote, the Château d'Eau, and all the streets near the Markets. On the left bank, the Veterans' barracks, St. Pelagie, the Place Maubert, the powder magazine of the Deux-Moulins, and all the barriers. At five in the evening they were masters of the Bastille, the Lingerie, and the Blanc-Manteaux, while their scouts had reached the Place des Victoires and menaced the Bank, the Petits-Pères Barracks, and the Post-Office. One-third of Paris was in the hands of the mob.

At all points the struggle had begun on a gigantic scale. The result of the disarmaments, the domiciliary visits, and the attack on the gunsmiths' shops, was, that the fight which had begun with the throwing of stones was continued with musket-shots.

About six in the evening the Passage du Saumon became the battle-field. The rioters were at one end, the troops at the other. They fired from one gate at the other. An observer, a dreamer, the author of this book, who went to get a near view of the volcano, found himself caught in the passage between two fires. He had nothing to protect him from the bullets but the project-

ing semi-columns which separate the shops. He remained nearly half an hour in this delicate position.

Meantime, the call to arms was beaten, the National Guards hurriedly dressed and armed themselves, the legions issued from the Mayoralties, and the regiments from their barracks. Opposite the Passage de L'Ancre a drummer was stabbed. Another was attacked in the Rue du Cygne by thirty young men, who ripped up his drum and took away his sword. A third was killed in the Rue Grenier St. Lazare. In the Rue Michel le Comte, three officers fell dead one after the other. Several municipal guards, wounded in the Rue des Lombards, retreated.

In front of the Cour Batave, a detachment of National Guards found a red flag, bearing this inscription: "Republican Revolution, No. 127." Was it indeed a revolution?

The insurrection had made of the heart of Paris a sort of inextricable, tortuous, and colossal citadel.

There was the nucleus, there the question would be solved. All the rest was merely skirmishing. The proof that all would be decided there lay in the fact that fighting had not yet begun there.

In some regiments, the troops were uncertain, which added to the alarming uncertainty of the crisis. They remembered the popular ovation which, in July, 1830, greeted the neutrality of the 53d Line. Two intrepid men, tried in great wars — Marshal de Lobau and General Bugeaud — were in command, Bugeaud under Lobau. Enormous patrols, composed of battalions of the line enclosed in entire companies of the National Guard, and preceded by a commissary of police, with his scarf of office, reconnoitred the insurgent streets. The insurgents, also, posted videttes at the corner of cross-roads, and audaciously sent patrols outside the barricades.

Each side was observing the other. The government, with an army in its hand, hesitated. Night was setting in, and the tocsin of St. Merry was beginning to sound. The minister of war, Marshal Soult, who had seen Austerlitz, looked on with a gloomy air.

These old sailors, accustomed to correct manœuvres, and having no resource and guide save tactics, the compass of battles, are completely lost in the presence of that immense foam which is called public wrath. The wind of revolutions is not favourable for sailing.

The National Guards of the suburbs hurried to turn in haste and disorder. A battalion of the 12th Light Infantry came at a run from St. Denis. The 14th Line arrived from Courbevoie; the batteries of the Military School took up their position at the Carrousel; cannon were brought down from Vincennes.

At the Tuileries there was not an additional sentry posted. Louis Philippe was full of serenity.

CHAPTER V.

ORIGINALITY OF PARIS.

DURING the past two years, Paris, as we have said, had seen more than one insurrection. With the exception of the insurgent districts, as a rule, nothing is more strangely calm than the physiognomy of Paris during a riot. Paris very soon grows accustomed to anything; it is only a riot, and Paris has so much business on hand that it does not put itself out for such a trifle. These colossal cities can alone offer such spectacles. These immense enclosures alone can contain at the same time civil war and singular tranquillity. Usually, when an insurrection begins, when the drum, the call to arms, and the general alarm are heard, the shop-keeper merely remarks: —

"Ah, there seems to be a row in the Rue St. Martin," or, "the Faubourg St. Antoine." And he often adds, carelessly: "Somewhere over that way."

A little later, when he hears the heart-rending and mournful sound of musketry and platoon fire, the shop-keeper says: —

"It 's getting hot; bless me! but it is getting hot."

A moment later, if the riot approaches and spreads, he precipitately closes his shop and rapidly puts on his uniform, — that is to say, places his wares in safety and risks his own person.

Men shoot one another at cross-roads, in a passage, or a blind alley. Barricades are taken, lost, and retaken;

blood flows; grape-shot pockmarks the fronts of houses; bullets kill people in their beds; corpses encumber the pavement. A few yards off, you hear the click of billiard-balls in coffee-houses.

The theatres open their doors and play light comedies; the gossips talk and laugh a couple of yards away from those streets filled with war. Hackney coaches roll along; people are going to dine out,— sometimes in the very district where the fighting is.

In 1831, a fusillade was interrupted in order to let a wedding party pass.

During the insurrection of May 12, 1839, in the Rue St. Martin, a little, infirm old man, dragging a hand-cart surmounted by a tricoloured rag, and carrying bottles full of some sort of liquid, came and went from barricade to troops, and from troops to barricade, impartially offering glasses of liquorice water,— now to the government, and now to anarchy.

Nothing can be stranger; and this is the peculiar characteristic of Parisian riots, which is not to be found in any other capital. Two things are requisite,— the great size of Paris and its gayety. The city of Voltaire and of Napoleon is required.

This time, however, in the resort to arms on June 5, 1832, the great city felt something which was, perhaps, stronger than itself. It was frightened.

Everywhere, in the most remote and "disinterested" districts, doors, windows, and shutters were closed in broad daylight. The courageous armed; the cowardly hid. The busy, careless passers-by disappeared. Many streets were as empty as at four o'clock in the morning.

Alarming details were hawked about. Fatal news spread,— that *they* were masters of the Bank; that at the cloisters of St. Merry alone there were six hundred of them intrenched and embattled in the church; that

the Line was not to be trusted; that Armand Carrel had been to see Marshal Clausel, and that the marshal said: "Get a regiment first;" that Lafayette, though ill, had said to them: "I am with you. I will follow you wherever there is room for a chair;" that people must be on their guard; that at night burglars would plunder lonely houses in deserted corners of Paris (here we recognize the imagination of the police, that Anne Radcliffe combined with the government); that a battery had been established in the Rue Aubry-le-Boucher; that Lobau and Bugeaud were consulting; and that at midnight, or at daybreak at the latest, four columns would march simultaneously on the centre of the revolt, the first coming from the Bastille, the second from the Porte St. Martin, the third from the Grève, and the fourth from the Markets; that perhaps, too, the troops would evacuate Paris, and retire to the Champ de Mars; that no one knew what would happen, but this time it was certainly serious.

People were alarmed, too, by the hesitation of Marshal Soult. Why did he not attack at once? It is certain that he was greatly absorbed. The old lion seemed to scent an unknown monster in the darkness.

Night came. The theatres were not opened. The patrols went their rounds with an irritated air; passers-by were searched; suspicious characters were arrested. At nine o'clock, more than eight hundred persons had been arrested; the Prefecture of Police, the Conciergerie, and La Force were crowded.

At the Conciergerie, especially, the long vault called the Rue de Paris was strewn with trusses of straw, on which lay a pile of prisoners, whom Lagrange, the man of Lyons, valiantly harangued. So much straw, moved by all those men, produced the sound of a shower.

Elsewhere prisoners slept in the open air, in the fields.

Anxiety prevailed everywhere, and a certain tremor, not at all usual in Paris.

People barricaded themselves in their houses; wives and mothers were alarmed; nothing was heard but "Oh, heavens! he has not come home." Only the semi-occasional roll of a carriage was heard in the distance.

People listened in their doorways to the noises, cries, tumults, and dull, indistinct sounds, to things of which they said: "That is the cavalry!" or "It is the gallop of caissons; to the bugles, the drums, the firing, and, above all, to the lamentable tocsin of St. Merry.

They waited for the first sound of artillery. Men started up at street corners and disappeared, shouting: "Get indoors!" And people made haste to bolt their doors. They said: "How will all this end?" From moment to moment, as the night became darker, Paris seemed to take on a more mournful hue from the fearful glare of the revolt.

BOOK XI.

THE ATOM FRATERNIZES WITH THE HURRICANE.

CHAPTER I.

EXPLANATIONS AS TO THE ORIGIN OF GAVROCHE'S POETRY; INFLUENCE OF AN ACADEMICIAN ON THAT POETRY.

AT the instant when the insurrection, brought to a head by the collision between the people and the troops in front of the Arsenal, produced a retrograde movement in the multitude that followed the hearse, and drove the crowd back throughout the whole length of the boulevards, upon the head of the procession, there was a frightful ebb. The mob was scattered, the ranks were broken; all ran, fled, escaped, some with cries of attack, others with the pallor of flight. The great

stream which covered the boulevards divided in the twinkling of an eye, overflowed to right and left, and spread in torrents over two hundred streets at once, with the roar of a dam let loose.

At this moment a ragged lad who was coming down the Rue Menilmontant, holding in his hand a branch of flowering laburnum which he had just plucked on the heights of Belleville, discovered an old holster-pistol in the shop window of a dealer in curiosities. He threw his blossoming branch on the pavement, and cried: —

"Mother What 's-your-name, I 'll borrow your machine."

And off he ran with the pistol.

Two minutes after, a crowd of frightened citizens flying through the Rue Amelot and the Rue Basse, met the lad, who was brandishing his pistol and singing: —

"At night we 're blind,
We see by day, I find.
A silly scrawl, they say,
Frightens the cits to-day.
Virtue 's the thing for you,
With your pointed hat, tutu!"

It was little Gavroche on his way to the wars.

On the boulevard he found out that his pistol had no trigger.

Who wrote the couplet which served to punctuate his march, and all the other songs which he was fond of singing when he had a chance? We know not. Who does? Himself, perhaps. Be this as it may, Gavroche was posted in all the popular tunes in vogue, and he added to them his own chirpings. Young imp and vagabond that he was, he made a hotch-potch of the voices of nature and the voices of Paris. He combined the repertory of the birds with that of the workshops. He was acquainted with artists' grinders, — a tribe con-

tiguous to his own. He had, it appears, been for three months apprenticed to a printer. He had once delivered a message for M. Baour Lormian, one of the Forty. Gavroche was a literary gutter-snipe.

He did not suspect, however, that on that wretched rainy night when he offered the hospitality of his elephant to the two brats, he was playing the part of Providence to his own brothers. His brothers in the evening, his father in the morning; such had been his night. On leaving the Rue des Ballets at dawn, he hurried back to the elephant, artistically extracted the two kids, shared with them some sort of a breakfast which he invented, and then went away, confiding them to that good mother, the street, who had brought him up almost wholly. On leaving them, he arranged to meet them at the same spot at night, and took leave of them in these words: "I am going to skedaddle, or absquatulate; or, as they say at court, I am going to hook it. If you do not find papa and mamma, come back again to-night, youngsters. I will scare you up some supper and put you to bed." The two children, picked up by some policeman and taken to the station, or stolen by some mountebank, or simply lost in that vast Chinese puzzle, Paris, did not return. The lowest depths of the actual social world are full of such lost tracks. Gavroche had not seen them again. Ten or twelve weeks had elapsed since that night. More than once he had scratched his head and asked: "Where the deuce are my two children?"

Meantime, he had reached the Rue du Pont-aux-Choux, pistol in hand. There was but one shop still open in that street; and, a matter worthy of reflection, it was a confectioner's shop. It was a providential opportunity to eat one more apple-puff before entering the unknown. Gavroche stopped, felt in his pockets, turned them in-

side out, found nothing, not even a sou, and began to shout: "Help!"

It is hard to go without the last cake. But for all that, Gavroche went on his way.

Two minutes later, he was in the Rue St. Louis. As he crossed the Rue du Parc Royal he felt that he must make up for the impossible apple-puff, and gave himself the immense treat of tearing down the play-bills in broad daylight.

A little farther on, seeing a group of comfortable-looking people, who seemed to have retired from business, he shrugged his shoulders and spat out this mouthful of philosophic bile at random: —

"How fat these men of means are! They just stuff themselves. They wallow in good dinners. Ask them what they do with their money, and they don't know. They eat it, that 's what they do! Eat their bellyful."

CHAPTER II.

GAVROCHE ON THE MARCH.

BRANDISHING a pistol without a trigger in the open streets is such a public function that Gavroche felt his spirits rise at every step. He cried, between the scraps of the " Marseillaise " which he sang : —

" All goes well. I suffer considerably in my left paw. I have broken up my rheumatism, but I am satisfied, citizens. The shop-keepers have only to hold firm, and I will sneeze them some subversive couplets. What are the police ? Dogs. Peter and Paul ! I must say I should like one at the end of my pistol.[1] Dogs are not to be disrespectfully treated. I have just come from the boulevard, my friends. It is getting warm ; it 's simmering ; it 's beginning to boil. It is time to skim the pot. Forward, my men ! Let an impure blood inundate the furrows ! I give my days for my country. I shall never see my dolly-mop again. No, no, it 's all over. My day

[1] An untranslatable pun, the trigger of a pistol being called a dog in France.

is done! Well, no matter! Long live joy! Let us fight, say I; I have had enough of despotism!"

At this moment the horse of a lancer of the National Guard, who was passing, having fallen, Gavroche laid his pistol on the pavement, helped the man up, and then helped to raise the horse, after which he picked up his pistol and went his way again.

In the Rue de Thorigny, all was peace and silence. This apathy, peculiar to the Marais, contrasted with the vast surrounding turmoil. Four gossips were conversing on a doorstep. Scotland has trios of witches, but Paris has quartets of gossips; and the "Thou shalt be king" might be as lugubriously cast at Bonaparte at the Baudoyer cross-roads, as to Macbeth on the Highland heath. The croak would be much the same.

The gossips in the Rue de Thorigny troubled themselves only about their own affairs. They were three portresses and a rag-picker with her basket and her hook.

All four of them seemed to be standing at the four corners of old age, which are decay, decrepitude, ruin, and sorrow.

The rag-picker was humble. In this open-air world the rag-picker bows, and the portress patronizes. The things thrown into the street are fat or lean according to the pleasure of the portress and the fancy of the person who makes the pile. There may be kindness in the broom.

This rag-picker was a grateful creature, and she smiled,— what a smile!— at the three portresses. They were making remarks like the following:—

"So your cat is as ill-tempered as ever?"

"Well, good gracious! you know that cats are naturally the enemies of dogs. It 's the dogs that complain."

"And people too."

"And yet cats' fleas do not run after people."

" That 's not the trouble; dogs are really dangerous. I remember one year when there were so many dogs that they were obliged to put it in the papers. It was at that time when there were big sheep at the Tuileries to drag the little carriage of the King of Rome. Do you remember the King of Rome?"

" I liked the Duke de Bordeaux better."

" Well, I knew Louis XVII. I like Louis XVII. better."

" How dear meat is, Ma'am Patagon!"

" Oh, don't mention it! Butcher's meat is a horror. A perfect horror. Nobody can afford anything but scraps nowadays."

Here the rag-picker interposed: —

" Ladies, trade is very dull. The ash-barrels are absolutely worthless. Nobody throws anything away now; they eat it all."

" There are poorer folk than you, Vargoulême."

" Ah, that 's true," the rag-picker replied deferentially, " for I have a profession."

There was a pause, and the rag-picker, yielding to that desire for display which lies at the bottom of the human heart, added: —

" When I go home in the morning I pick over my basket; I sort the articles. That makes heaps in my room. I put the rags in a basket, the cabbage-stalks and cores in a tub, the pieces of linen in my cupboard, the woollen rags in my chest of drawers, old papers in the corner of the window, things good to eat in my porringer, bits of glass in the fireplace, old shoes behind the door, and bones under my bed."

Gavroche had stopped behind her, and was listening.

" Old ladies," said he, " what right have you to talk politics?"

A broadside, composed of a quadruple yell, assailed him.

" There 's another villain. "

" What has he got in his paw, — a pistol? "

" Just think, that beggarly brat! "

" Such wretches are never easy unless they are overturning the authorities. "

Gavroche disdainfully limited his reprisals to lifting the tip of his nose with his thumb, and opening his hand to the full extent. The rag-picker exclaimed: —

" Miserable, barefooted scamp! "

The one who answered to the name of Ma'am Patagon struck her hands together in horror.

" There are going to be evil doings, that 's clear. The errand-boy round the corner with the beard, I used to see him pass every morning with a jade in a pink bonnet on his arm; but this morning I saw him pass, and he had a gun on his arm. Ma'am Bacheux says there was a revolution last week at — at — at — at — Where do the calves come from? At Pontoise. And then, just look at this atrocious young villain, with his pistol. It seems that the Celestins are full of cannon. What is the government to do with these blackguards, who can do nothing but invent ways to upset the world, just when we were beginning to get over all the misfortunes which befell, good Lord! That poor queen whom I saw pass in a cart! And all this will put up the price of snuff again. It is infamous! And I will certainly go and see you guillotined, you scamp! "

" Don't snort, my aged friend, " said Gavroche. " Blow your promontory. " And he passed on.

When he was in the Rue Pavée his thoughts reverted to the rag-picker, and he soliloquized: —

" You are wrong to insult Revolutionists, Mother Cornerpost. This pistol is on your behalf. It is that you may have more good things to eat in your basket. "

All at once he heard a noise behind him. It was the

portress Patagon, who had followed him, and who shook her fist at him from afar, crying: —

"You are only a bastard."

"I don't care a button for that!" said Gavroche.

A little later he passed the Hotel Lamoignon. There he uttered this appeal: —

"Let us haste to the battle."

And he was attacked by a fit of melancholy. He regarded his pistol with an air of reproach which seemed an attempt to move it: —

"I am going off," said he, "but you will not go off."

One dog may distract us from another.[1] A very thin poodle passed just then. Gavroche felt pity for it.

"Poor little bow-wow," said he, "have you swallowed a barrel that we see all the hoops?"

Then he proceeded toward the Orme St. Gervais.

[1] Another allusion to the trigger (*chien*) of the pistol.

CHAPTER III.

JUST INDIGNATION OF A WIG-MAKER.

THE worthy barber who had driven off the two children to whom Gavroche had opened the elephant's paternal bowels, was at this moment in his shop, engaged in shaving an old soldier of the legion who had served under the Empire. They were chatting together. The barber had naturally spoken to the veteran of the riot, then of General Lamarque, and from Lamarque they had passed to the Emperor. Hence arose a conversation between the barber and the soldier, which Prudhomme, had he been present, would have enriched with arabesques, and would have entitled, " A dialogue between the razor and the sword. "

" How did the Emperor ride, sir ? " asked the barber.

" Badly. He did not know how to fall off; accordingly, he never fell off. "

" Had he fine horses ? He must have had fine horses ! "

" On the day when he gave me the cross I noticed his beast. She was a white mare. Her ears were very far apart, her saddle deep, her head fine, marked with a black

star, her neck very long, knees prominent, flanks projecting, shoulders oblique, and crupper strong. She was a little more than fifteen hands high."

"A fine horse," said the barber.

"She was his Majesty's animal."

The barber felt that after this remark a short silence was befitting. He was silent, then he went on:—

"The Emperor was only wounded once, I believe, sir?"

The old soldier replied, with the calm and sovereign tone of a man who has been there himself:—

"In the heel. At Ratisbon. I never saw him so well dressed as on that day. He was as clean as a new sou."

"And you, sir, I suppose, have often been wounded?"

"I," said the soldier; "oh, a mere flea-bite! I received two sabre-cuts on the nape of my neck at Marengo; I got a bullet in my right arm at Jena, another in the left hip at Jena; at Friedland, a bayonet-thrust, — there; at the Moskowa seven or eight lance-prods,— never mind where. At Lützen a splinter of shell carried off a finger, and — oh, yes! at Waterloo a bullet from a grape-shot in my thigh. That 's all."

"How glorious that is!" exclaimed the barber, in Pindaric accents, "to die on the battle-field! On my word of honour, sooner than die in my bed of disease, slowly, a bit every day, with drugs, cataplasms, clysters, and medicine, I would sooner have a cannon-ball in my stomach!"

"You 're not over particular," said the soldier.

He had scarcely ended when a frightful noise shook the shop. A great pane of glass in the show-window was suddenly smashed.

The barber turned livid.

"Good Lord!" he cried, "that 's one of them now."

"What?"

"A cannon-ball."

"Here it is," said the soldier. And he picked up something which was rolling about the floor. It was a pebble.

The barber ran to his broken pane, and saw Gavroche flying at full speed toward the Marché St. Jean. As he passed the barber's shop, Gavroche, who had the two brats still on his mind, could not resist the desire to wish him good-evening, and threw a stone through his window.

"Just look there," yelled the barber, who was now blue instead of livid, "that rascal does mischief for the mere pleasure of it! What have I done to that villain?"

CHAPTER IV.

THE CHILD IS AMAZED AT THE OLD MAN.

ON reaching the Marché St. Jean, where the post had been already disarmed, Gavroche "effected a junction" with a band led by Enjolras, Courfeyrac, Combeferre, and Feuilly. They were all more or less armed. Bahorel and Prouvaire had joined them, and swelled the group. Enjolras had a double-barrelled fowling-piece, Combeferre a National Guard's musket bearing the number of a legion, and in his waist-belt two pistols, which his unbuttoned coat revealed, Jean Prouvaire an old cavalry musket, Bahorel a carbine. Courfeyrac brandished a sword-cane: Feuilly, with a naked sabre in his hand, marched at the head, shouting: "Long live Poland!"

They reached the Quai Morland cravatless, hatless, breathless, drenched with rain, but with flashing eyes. Gavroche calmly addressed them:—

"Where are we going?"

"Come," said Courfeyrac.

Behind Feuilly marched, or rather bounded Bahorel, at home in the waters of revolt. He had a crimson waistcoat, and uttered such words as smash everything. His waistcoat upset a passer-by, who cried desperately: "Here are the reds!"

"The reds, the reds!" retorted Bahorel; "a funny kind of fear, citizen. For my part, I do not tremble at

a poppy. Little Red Riding Hood inspires me with no alarm. Citizen, take my advice; let us leave fear of the red to horned cattle."

He caught sight of a corner wall, on which was placarded the most peaceful piece of paper in the world,— a permission to eat eggs, a Lenten charge addressed by the archbishop of Paris to his "flock."

Bahorel exclaimed:—

"Flock! A polite way of saying geese." And he tore the paper from the wall.

This conquered Gavroche. From that instant he began to study Bahorel.

"Bahorel," observed Enjolras, "you are wrong. You should have let that order alone; we have nothing to do with it. You waste your passion. Keep your stock by you. A man does not fire to no purpose out of the ranks, either with his soul or his gun."

"Every man after his own fashion, Enjolras," replied Bahorel. "The bishop's prose offends me. I insist on eating eggs without receiving permission to do so. Yours is the hot and cold style. I prefer to amuse myself. Moreover, I am not wasting myself, but getting up steam; and if I tore down that order, Hercle! it was to give me an appetite."

The word *Hercle* struck Gavroche. He sought every opportunity of learning, and this tearer down of posters possessed his esteem. He asked:—

"What 's the meaning of *Hercle?*"

Bahorel answered:—

"It 's Latin for 'damn.'"

Here Bahorel recognized at a window a pale young man, with a black beard, who watched them as they passed,—probably a Friend of the A. B. C. He shouted to him:—

"Quick with the cartridges, *para bellum.*"

" A handsome man (*bel homme*)! That 's true," said Gavroche, who now understood Latin.

A tumultuous escort accompanied them,— students, artists, young men affiliated to the Cougourde of Aix, artisans, and lightermen, armed with sticks and bayonets; some, like Combeferre, with pistols thrust into their waist-band.

An old man, who appeared to be extremely aged, marched in this band.

He had no weapon, and hurried on, that he might not be left behind, although he looked thoughtful.

Gavroche caught sight of him.

" What 's dat? " he said to Courfeyrac.

" An old bloke. "

It was M. Mabœuf.

CHAPTER V.

THE OLD MAN.

LET us explain what had occurred.

Enjolras and his friends were on the Boulevard Bourdon near the public granaries, when the dragoons charged. Enjolras, Courfeyrac, and Combeferre were among those who turned into the Rue Bassompierre shouting "To the barricades!" In the Rue Lesdiguières they met an old man walking along. What attracted their attention was, that the worthy man moved very irregularly, as if intoxicated. Moreover, he had his hat in his hand, although it had rained the whole morning, and was raining rather hard at that very moment. Courfeyrac recognized Father Mabœuf. He knew him through having sometimes accompanied Marius as far as his door. Knowing the peaceful and more than timid habits of the old churchwarden and bibliomaniac, and amazed at seeing him in the midst of the tumult, within a couple of paces of cavalry charges, almost in the midst of the musketry fire, bareheaded in the rain, and wandering about among bullets, he accosted him, and the rebel of five-and-twenty and the octogenarian exchanged this dialogue: —

"Monsieur Mabœuf, you had better go home."

"Why so?"

"There is going to be a row."

"That 's good."

"Sabre-cuts and shots, M. Mabœuf."

Gavroche leading the Recruits.

Photogravure from Painting by Jeanniot.

CAFE

"That 's good."

"Cannon-shots."

"That 's good. Where are you gentlemen going?"

"To upset the government."

"That 's good." And he began to follow them.

Since that moment he had not uttered a word. His step had suddenly become firm. Workmen offered him an arm; he declined it with a shake of the head. He advanced almost to the front rank of the column, having at once the motions of a man who is marching and the face of a man who is asleep.

"What a determined old fellow!" muttered the students. A rumour spread through the party that he was an ex-Conventionalist, an old regicide. The mob turned into the Rue de la Verrerie.

Little Gavroche marched at the head, singing at the top of his voice, which made him resemble a bugler. He sang: —

"How brightly shines the moon,
Shall we go to the woods very soon?
Said Johnny to Jane.
Tou tou tou
For Chatou,
I have but one God, one master, one copper, one cane.

"For tippling at morn
The dew from the thorn,
Two sparrows grew vain.
Zi zi zi
For Passy.
I have but one God, one master, one copper, one cane.

"And those dear little things
Got as drunk as two kings;
The tiger roared and shook his mane.
Don don don
For Meudon.
I have but one God, one master, one copper, one cane.

"One sang and one swore.
Shall we go to the forest no more?
Said Johnny to Jane.
Tin tin tin
For Pantin.
I have but one God, one master, one copper, one cane."

They went toward St. Merry.

CHAPTER VI.

RECRUITS.

THE crowd increased with every instant. Near the Rue des Billettes, a tall man, whose hair was beginning to turn gray, whose bold and daring mien Courfeyrac, Enjolras, and Combeferre noticed, though not one of them knew him, joined them. Gavroche, busy singing, whistling, humming, running on ahead, and rapping on shop shutters with the butt of his triggerless pistol, paid no attention to this man.

In the Rue de la Verrerie they happened to pass Courfeyrac's door.

"That's lucky," said Courfeyrac, "for I have forgotten my purse and lost my hat."

He left the procession and bounded upstairs, where he put on an old hat and put his purse in his pocket. He also took a large square box about the size of a portmanteau, which was concealed among his dirty linen.

As he was running downstairs again his portress hailed him: —

"Monsieur de Courfeyrac!"

"Portress, what is your name?" retorted Courfeyrac.

She stood with open mouth.

"Why, you know very well, sir, I am the porter; my name is Mother Veuvain."

"Well, then, if ever you call me M. *de* Courfeyrac again, I shall call you Mother *de* Veuvain. Now speak; what is the matter? What is it?"

"Some one wishes to speak to you."

"Who is it?"

"I don't know."

"Where is he?"

"In my lodge."

"Deuce take him!" said Courfeyrac.

"But he has been waiting for more than an hour for you to come in!" rejoined the portress.

At the same time a sort of young workman, thin, pale, small, freckled, dressed in an old blouse and a pair of patched velveteen trousers, who looked more like a girl dressed up as a boy than a man, stepped out of the lodge and said to Courfeyrac in a voice which was not the least in the world a feminine voice: —

"Monsieur Marius, if you please?"

"He is not here."

"Will he return to-night?"

"I do not know." And Courfeyrac added: "I shall not be in to-night."

The young man looked at him intently and asked:

"Why not?"

"Because."

"Where are you going?"

"What is that to you?"

"Shall I carry your box for you?"

"I am going to the barricades."

"Shall I go with you?"

"If you like," replied Courfeyrac. "The street is free; the sidewalks belong to all."

And he made his escape at a run to rejoin his friends. When he had done so, he gave one of them the box to

carry. It was not until a quarter of an hour later that he noticed that the young man had really followed them.

A mob does not go exactly where it intends. We have explained that a puff of wind directs it. They passed by St. Merry and found themselves, without exactly knowing how, in the Rue St. Denis.

BOOK XII.

CORINTH.

CHAPTER I.

HISTORY OF CORINTH FROM ITS FOUNDATION.

PARISIANS, who on entering the Rue Rambuteau at the end near the Markets, note on their right, opposite the Rue Mondétour, a basket-maker's shop having for its sign a basket in the shape of Napoleon the Great, with this inscription : —

> NAPOLEON IS MADE
> ENTIRELY OF WILLOW, —

do not suspect the terrible scenes which this very spot witnessed hardly thirty years ago.

Here were the Rue de la Chanvrerie, which old title-deeds spell Chanverrerie, and the celebrated wine-shop called "Corinth."

Our readers will remember all that has been said about the barricade erected at this spot, and eclipsed, by the way, by the St. Merry barricade. It is on this famous barricade of the Rue de la Chanvrerie, which has now fallen into deep obscurity, that we are about to shed a little light.

For the clearness of our narrative, we may be permitted to have recourse to the simple means already employed in the case of Waterloo. Those who wish to represent to themselves in a tolerably exact manner the blocks of houses which at that day stood near Pointe St.-Eustache, at the north-east corner of the Markets where the entrance to the Rue Rambuteau now is, have only to imagine an *N* whose two perpendicular lines form the Rue de la Grande Truanderie and the Rue de la Chanvrerie, the Rue de la Petite Truanderie, forming the transverse bar. The old Rue Mondétour intersected the three lines at the most crooked angles. So that the labyrinthine confusion of these four streets sufficed to make in a space of one hundred square yards, between the Markets and the Rue St. Denis on the one hand, between the Rue du Cygne and the Rue des Prêcheurs, on the other, seven islets of houses, strangely cut up, of various sizes, placed sideways, and at random, and scarce separated by narrow cracks, like the blocks of stone in a dock.

We say narrow cracks; and we cannot give a fairer idea of those dark, narrow, crooked lanes, lined with tenements eight stories in height. These houses were so decrepit that in the Rues de la Chanvrerie and La Petite Truanderie, the fronts were supported by beams running across from one house to the other. The street was narrow and the gutter wide; the passer-by walked on a pavement that was always wet, passing shops like cellars, heavy posts ringed with iron, huge heaps of filth, and gates armed with vast century-old gratings. The Rue Rambuteau has destroyed all this.

The name Mondétour exactly describes the windings of this net-work of streets. A little farther on they were even better expressed by the Rue Pirouette, which ran into the Rue Mondétour.

The wayfarer who turned out of the Rue St. Denis into the Rue de la Chanvrerie, saw it gradually close in before him, as if he had entered an elongated funnel. At the end of the street, which was very short, he found further passage barred in the direction of the Markets by a tall row of houses; and he might have fancied himself in a blind alley, had he not perceived on his right and left two dark cuts through which he could escape. This was the Rue Mondétour, which on one side ran into the Rue des Prêcheurs, on the other into the Rue du Cygne, and the Petite Truanderie. At the end of this sort of blind alley, at the corner of the right-hand cutting, was a house somewhat lower than the others, forming a sort of cape in the street. It was in this house, only two stories high, that a famous tavern was merrily installed more than three hundred years ago. This inn produced a joyous noise at the very spot which old Theophile described in the two lines:

> "There swing the horrid bones
> Of a poor lover who himself did hang."

The situation was good, and landlords succeeded each other from father to son.

In the time of Mathurin Régnier this inn was called the Pot of Roses; and as rebuses were then fashionable, it had on its sign-board a post painted pink, (*poteau rose, pot-aux-roses*). In the last century the worthy Natoire, one of the fantastic masters now disdained by the precise school, having got tipsy several times in this inn at the same table where Régnier had drunk his fill, painted, out of gratitude, a bunch of currants on the pink post. The landlord, in his delight, changed his sign, and put under the bunch in gilt letters, "The Bunch of Currants"

(Au Raisin de Corinthe). Hence the name Corinth. Nothing is more natural to drunkards than ellipses. The ellipse is the zigzag of language. Corinth gradually dethroned the Pot of Roses. The last landlord of the dynasty, Father Hucheloup, not being acquainted with the tradition, had the post painted blue.

A ground-floor room in which was the bar, a first-floor room in which was a billiard-table, a spiral wooden staircase piercing the ceiling, wine on the tables, smoke on the walls, and candles by daylight — such was the inn. A staircase with a trap-door in the lower room led to the cellar. The apartments of the Hucheloups were on the second-floor, reached by a ladder like a staircase, and through a door hidden in the wall of the large first-floor room. Under the roof were two garrets, the nests of the maid-servants; and the kitchen shared the ground-floor with the bar.

Father Hucheloup might have been born a chemist, but he was really a cook; customers not only drank, they also ate, in his wine-shop. Hucheloup had invented an excellent dish, which could be eaten nowhere but at his establishment; it was stuffed carp, which he called *carpe au gras.* This dish was eaten by the light of a tallow candle, or a lamp of the Louis XVI. style, on tables to which oil-cloth was nailed in lieu of a table-cloth. People came from a long distance. Hucheloup, one fine morning, thought it advisable to inform passers-by of his "specialty." He dipped a brush in a pot of blacking, and as he had a fashion of spelling of his own, he improvised on his wall the following remarkable inscription :—

CARPES HO GRAS.

One winter, rain and hail took a fancy to efface the *s* which terminated the first word, and the *g* which began the last; this was left: —

CARPE HO RAS.

By the aid of time and rain, a humble gastronomic notice had become a profound piece of advice.

In this way it happened that Hucheloup, not knowing French, knew Latin, that he brought philosophy out of the kitchen, and, while simply wishing to efface Carême, he had equalled Horace. And the striking thing was that this also meant: "Enter my inn." Nothing of all this now exists. The Mondétour labyrinth was gutted and widened in 1847, and probably no longer exists. The Rue de la Chanvrerie and Corinth have disappeared under the pavement of the Rue Rambuteau.

As we have said, Corinth was a meeting-place, if not a gathering-place, for Courfeyrac and his friends. Grantaire discovered it. He entered on account of the *Carpe ho ras* and returned for the sake of the carp *au gras*. Here they drank, ate, and made a row. They paid little, paid badly, or paid not at all; they were always welcome. Father Hucheloup was a worthy fellow.

Hucheloup, a worthy fellow, as we say, was an eating-house keeper with a mustache, — an amusing variety. He always looked ill-tempered, seemed anxious to intimidate his customers, growled at those who entered, and seemed more disposed to quarrel with them than to serve them with soup. And yet we maintain people were always welcome. This peculiarity brought custom to his shop, and attracted young men, who said: "Let us go and hear Father Hucheloup scold." He had been a fencing-master. He would suddenly break out into a laugh. He had a rough voice, but was a merry devil. His was a comic foundation under a tragic exterior; he asked for nothing better than to frighten you, — something like the snuff-boxes in the shape of a pistol: the detonation produces a sneeze.

His wife, Mother Hucheloup, was a bearded and very ugly creature.

About 1830, Father Hucheloup died, and with him disappeared the secret of the carp *au gras*. His inconsolable widow carried on the business. But the cooking degenerated and became execrable; the wine, which had always been bad, became frightful. Courfeyrac and his friends, however, continued to go to Corinth, — out of pity, Bossuet said.

Widow Hucheloup was short of breath and shapeless, and given to rustic recollections. She deprived them of their insipidity by her pronunciation. She had a way of her own of saying things, which spiced her reminiscences of her village and of the spring. It had formerly been her delight, she declared, to hear "the red-beasts singing in the awe-thorns." [1]

The lower room, where the "restaurant" was, was a large, long apartment, crowded with stools, chairs, benches, and tables, and a rickety old billiard-table. It was reached by a spiral staircase which led to a square hole in the corner of the room, like a ship's hatchway.

This apartment, lighted by one narrow window and a lamp, constantly burning, had the look of a garret. All the four-legged articles of furniture behaved as if they had but three. The whitewashed walls had for sole ornament the following quatrain in honour of Ma'am Hucheloup: —

"At ten steps she amazes, she alarms you at two.
A wart in her hazardous nose doth abide;
Each instant you shake lest she blow it at you,
And lest some fine day her nose in her mouth should reside."

This was scrawled in charcoal on the wall.

Ma'am Hucheloup, a very good likeness, came and went

[1] The red-breasts singing in the hawthorns.

past this quatrain from morning till night, with the most perfect tranquillity. Two servant-girls, called Matelote[1] and Gibelotte,[2] who had never been known by other names, helped Ma'am Hucheloup to set on the tables the jug of poor wine, and the various messes served in earthenware bowls to hungry guests. Matelote, tall, stout, red-haired, and noisy, the favourite ex-sultana of the defunct Hucheloup, was uglier than the ugliest mythological monster; and yet, as it is always proper that the servant should be a little behind the mistress, she was not quite so ugly as Ma'am Hucheloup. Gibelotte, tall, delicate, white, with a lymphatic whiteness, with blue circles round her eyes, and drooping lids, always exhausted and oppressed, and suffering from what may be called chronic lassitude, the first to rise, the last to go to bed, waited on everybody, even the other servant, silently and gently, smiling through her weariness with a sort of vague, sleepy smile.

Before entering the restaurant, one might read on the door the following line written by Courfeyrac in chalk:

"Treat if you can, and eat if you dare."

[1] Stewed eels. [2] Stewed rabbit.

CHAPTER II.

PRELIMINARY GAYETIES.

THE Eagle of Meaux, as we know, preferred to live with Joly rather than with any one else. He had a lodging much as the bird has a branch. The two friends lived together, ate together, slept together. They had everything in common, Musichetta perhaps included. They were, to use the expression of the schools, *bini*, or twins. On the morning of June 5, they went to breakfast at Corinth. Joly, all stuffed up, had a cold in his head, which the Eagle was beginning to share. Laigle's coat was threadbare, while Joly was well dressed.

It was about nine in the morning when they pushed open the door of Corinth. They went up to the first-floor room, where they were received by Matelote and Gibelotte.

"Oysters, cheese, and ham," said Laigle.

They sat down at the table. The room was empty; there was no one in it but themselves. Gibelotte, recognizing Joly and Laigle, placed a bottle of wine on the

table. As they attacked the first dozen of oysters, a head appeared in the hatchway, and a voice said : —

"As I was passing, I smelt a delicious perfume of Brie cheese, so I stepped in."

It was Grantaire. He took a stool and drew up to the table. Gibelotte, on seeing Grantaire, placed two bottles of wine on the table, which made three.

"Are you going to drink those two bottles?" Laigle asked Grantaire, who replied : —

"All men are ingenious, but you alone are ingenuous. Two bottles never yet astonished a man."

The others began by eating ; Grantaire began by drinking. Half a bottle was soon swallowed.

"Why, you must have a hole in your stomach," said Laigle.

"Well, you have one in your elbow," retorted Grantaire. And having emptied his glass, he added : "Oh, yes, Laigle of the funeral orations, your coat is old."

"I should hope so," Laigle replied. "That 's why my coat and I live so comfortably together. It has assumed all my wrinkles, it does not pinch me anywhere, it has moulded itself to my deformities, it yields to all my movements, and I am only conscious of it because it keeps me warm. Old coats are like old friends."

"No, no!" cried Joly, entering into the conversation, "an old coat is no better than an old goat."

"Especially in the mouth of a man whose head is all stuffed up with a cold," said Grantaire.

"Grantaire," asked Laigle, "have you come from the boulevard?"

"No."

"Joly and I have just seen the head of the procession pass."

"It is a barvellous sight," said Joly.

"How quiet this street is!" exclaimed Laigle. "Who would suspect that Paris is turned topsy-turvy? How easy it is to see that there used to be nothing but monasteries all round here! Du Breuil and Sauval give a list of them, and so does Abbé Lebœuf. They were all about here,— they swarmed. There were monks, shod and barefooted, tonsured and bearded, gray, black, white, Franciscans, Minims, Capuchins, Carmelites, Little Augustines, Great Augustines, Old Augustines —"

"Don't talk about monks," interrupted Grantaire, "for it makes me want to scratch myself." Then he exclaimed: —

"Pah! I have just swallowed a bad oyster. That will bring back my hypochondria. The oysters are bad, the servant-girls are ugly. I hate the human race. I just now passed the great public library in the Rue Richelieu. That pile of oyster-shells, which is called a library, disgusts me with thinking. What a waste of paper and of ink! What a mass of pothooks and hangers! Think of all that has been written! What ass was it that said man was a featherless biped?[1] And then, too, I met a pretty girl I know, lovely as the spring, worthy to be called Floreal, who was ravished, transported, in paradise, because yesterday a wretch, a hideous banker spotted with small-pox, deigned to throw his handkerchief to her! Alas! woman looks out for a keeper quite as much as for a lover; cats catch mice as well as birds. This girl not two months ago was living respectably in a garret; she fitted little brass rings into the eyelet-holes of stays — what do you call that business? She sewed, she had a truckle bed, she lived beside a pot of flowers; she was content. Now she is a bankeress. The transformation took place last night. I met the victim this morning, perfectly happy. The hideous part

[1] A biped without a quill.

of it is, that the wretched creature was quite as pretty this morning as she was yesterday. There was no sign of her financier in her face. Roses have this advantage or disadvantage over women, that the marks which caterpillars leave on them are visible. Ah! there is no morality left in the world, and I call to witness the myrtle, the symbol of love, the laurel, the symbol of war, the olive, that absurd symbol of peace, the apple-tree, which nearly choked Adam with its pips, and the fig-tree, the grandfather of petticoats. As for justice, do you know what justice is? The Gauls covet Clusium; Rome protects Clusium, and asks what wrong Clusium has done them. Brennus answers: 'The wrong which Alba did to you; the wrong that Fidena did to you; the wrong that the Equi, Volscians, and Sabines did to you. They were your neighbours. The Clusians are ours. We understand neighbourliness in the same way that you do. You stole Alba; we take Clusium.' Rome says, 'You shall not take Clusium.' Brennus took Rome. Then he cried: 'Væ victis!' That is what justice is! Oh, how many beasts of prey there are in this world! How many eagles! It makes my flesh creep."

He held out his glass to Joly, who filled it; then he drank, and continued, almost uninterrupted by this glass of wine, which no one noticed, not even himself: —

"Brennus, who takes Rome, is an eagle; the banker, who takes the seamstress, is an eagle. There is no more shame in one case than in the other. So let us believe in nothing. There is only one reality, — drink. Whatever your opinion may be, whether you back the lean cock, like the canton of Uri, or the fat cock, like the canton of Glarus, it is of no consequence; drink. You talk to me of the boulevard, the procession, etc. What! are we to have another revolution? Such poverty of resources on the part of the good God astonishes me. He has to keep

greasing the groove of events. Things stick; they won't work. Look sharp, then, — a revolution. The good God's hands are kept black all the time with that filthy cart-grease. In his place, I should act more simply. I should not wind up my machinery every moment; I would deal with the human race in summary fashion; I would knit matters mesh by mesh, without breaking the thread; I would have no temporary substitutes, and no extraordinary repertory. What you fellows call progress has two motors, — men and events. But, sad to say, the exceptional is required, every now and then. For events as for men, the ordinary stock-company does not suffice; among men there must be geniuses, and among events, revolutions. Great accidents are the law; the order of things cannot do without them; and, judging by the apparition of comets, we might be tempted to believe that heaven itself feels a want of leading actors. At the moment when it is least expected, God bills the wall of the firmament with a meteor. Some strange star follows, underlined by an enormous tail, and that causes the death of Cæsar. Brutus gives him a dagger-thrust, and God deals him a blow with a comet. Presto change! here we have an aurora borealis, a revolution, a great man, '93 in big letters, Napoleon in a display heading, the comet of 1811 at the head of the bill. Ah, what a fine blue poster, spangled all over with unexpected stars! Boom! boom! an extraordinary show. Look up, stupids. Everything is in confusion, the star as well as the drama. O Lord! it is too much and not enough. These resources, drawn from exceptional circumstances, seem magnificence and are only poverty. My friends, Providence is reduced to expedients. What does a revolution prove? That God is in a fix. He produces a *coup d'état*, because there is a solution of continuity between the present and the future, and He is unable to make both ends meet. In fact, this confirms

me in my conjectures as to the state of Jehovah's fortune; and when I see so much discomfort above and below, so much paltriness and pinching and economy and distress, both in heaven and on earth, from the bird which has not a grain of millet down to myself who have not one hundred thousand francs a year; when I see human destiny, which is very much worn, and even royal destiny, which is threadbare, — witness the Prince de Condé hung; when I see winter, which is only a rent in the zenith, through which the wind blows; when I see so many rags, even in the brand-new morning purple on the tops of the hills; when I see the drops of dew, those mock pearls, and the hoar-frost, that paste; when I see humanity ripped apart and events patched, and so many spots on the sun, so many holes in the moon, and so much wretchedness everywhere, — I suspect that God is not rich. He makes a good show, it is true; but I see He is hard up. He gives a revolution, just as a merchant whose cash-box is empty gives a ball. We must not judge the gods by appearances. Beneath the gilding of heaven I catch a glimpse of a poverty-stricken universe. Creation is bankrupt; that is why I am dissatisfied. Just look, this is June 5; it is almost night. I have been waiting ever since morning for daylight to dawn, and it has not come; and I will wager that it won't come at all. This is the irregularity of an ill-paid clerk. Yes, everything is badly arranged; nothing fits into anything else. This old world is all out of kilter; I place myself in the ranks of the opposition. Everything goes awry; the Universe is a plague. It is like children, — those who want them have none, and those who don't want them have them. Total: I 'm mad. Then, again, it annoys me to look at that bald-headed Laigle of Meaux. I am humiliated by the thought that I am just the same age as that billiard ball. However, I criticise; I do not insult. The Universe is what it is. I speak without any

evil intention, and solely to ease my conscience. Receive, Eternal Father, the assurance of my most distinguished consideration. Ah, by all the saints of Olympus, and by all the gods of paradise, I was not made for a Parisian, — that is to say, to be perpetually flung like a shuttle-cock between two battledores, from a group of idlers to a group of rowdies. No! I was meant to be a Turk, looking all day long at Oriental damsels performing those exquisite Egyptian dances, which are as sensuous as the dreams of a chaste man, or a Beauceron peasant, or a Venetian gentleman surrounded by gentlewomen, or a petty German prince supplying half a soldier to the Germanic Confederation, and employing his leisure hours in drying his stockings on his hedge, that is to say, his frontier! Such were the destinies for which I was born. Yes, I said Turk, and I will not retract. I do not understand why the Turks are usually looked upon askance; Mahomet has some good points. Let us respect the inventor of harems, of houris and paradises of Odalisques. Let us not insult Mohammedanism, the only religion adorned with a hen-roost! After this, I insist upon drinking. The earth is a great piece of stupidity. And it appears that all those asses are going to fight, to break each other's heads and massacre each other in the heart of summer, in the month of June, when they might go off with a creature on their arm, to breathe the perfume of that immense cup of tea of new-mown hay in the fields. Really, too many follies are committed. An old broken lantern, which I saw just now at a second-hand dealer's, suggests to me a reflection: 'It is high time to enlighten the human race.' Yes, I am sad again! That comes of swallowing an oyster and a revolution the wrong way! I am growing melancholy once more. Oh, frightful old world, on your surface people struggle, are dismissed, prostitute themselves, kill themselves, and grow accustomed to it!"

And after this burst of eloquence, Grantaire had a fit of coughing, which was well deserved.

"Talking of revolution," said Joly, "it seebs that Barius is decidedly in lobe."

"Do you know with whom?" asked Laigle.

"Do."

"No?"

"Do! I say."

"The loves of Marius!" exclaimed Grantaire, "I see them from here. Marius is a fog, and he has found a vapour. Marius belongs to the poetic race. 'Poet' and 'madman' are convertible terms. Thymbræus Apollo. Marius and his Marie, or his Maria, or his Mariette, or his Marion, must be a funny brace of lovers. I can fancy what it is like. Ecstasies in which they forget to kiss. Chaste on earth, but joined in heaven. Their souls have senses. They sleep together in the stars."

Grantaire was attacking his second bottle, and perhaps his second harangue, when a new personage emerged from the staircase hatchway. It was a boy under ten years of age, ragged, very small, yellow, with a bull-dog face, a quick eye, and an enormous shock of hair, dripping wet; but he looked happy.

The lad, choosing without hesitation among the three, though he knew none of them, addressed Laigle of Meaux.

"Are you Monsieur Bossuet?"

"That 's my nickname," replied Laigle. "What do you want?"

"A tall, light-haired gent said to me on the boulevard: 'Do you know Mother Hucheloup?' I said: 'Yes; in the Rue Chanvrerie, — the old cove's widow.' Says he to me: 'Go there; you will find Monsieur Bossuet there. Tell him from me: "A — B — C."' I suppose it 's a put-up job, eh? He gave me ten sous."

"Jolly, lend me ten sous?" said Laigle; and turning to Grantaire: "Grantaire, lend me ten sous?"

This made twenty sous, which Laigle gave the lad. "Thank you, sir," said the little boy.

"What is your name?" asked Laigle.

"Navet, Gavroche's friend."

"Stay with us," said Laigle.

"Breakfast with us," added Grantaire.

The lad replied: "I can't; I belong to the procession. I 'm the one that cries: 'Down with Polignac.'"

And with a prolonged scrape of his foot, which is the most respectful of salutes, he took his leave.

When he was gone, Grantaire remarked: —

"That is the simon-pure gutter-snipe. There are many varieties of the genus gutter-snipe. The notary street-arab is 'skip-the-gutter'; the cook street-arab is a 'scullion'; the baker street-arab is a 'doughboy'; the footman street-arab is a 'tiger'; the sailor street-arab is a 'powder monkey'; the soldier street-arab is 'the child of the regiment'; the tradesman street-arab is an 'errand boy'; the courtier street-arab is a 'page'; the royal street-arab is a 'dauphin'; and the divine street-arab is a 'Bambino.'"

In the mean time, Laigle meditated; he said half aloud: —

"A — B — C; that is to say, burial of Lamarque."

"The tall, fair man," observed Grantaire, "is Enjolras, who has sent to warn you."

"Shall we go?" asked Bossuet.

"It 's raiding," said Joly. "I have sworn to go through fire but dot through water, and I do dot wish to bake by gold worse."

"I shall stay here," remarked Grantaire. "I prefer a breakfast to a hearse."

"Conclusion: we remain," continued Laigle; "well,

then let us drink. Besides, we may miss the funeral without missing the row."

"Ah, the row!" cried Joly; "I'b id that."

Laigle rubbed his hands.

"So the Revolution of 1830 is to be touched up again. In fact, it is getting rather tight at the arm-holes."

"I do not care a rap for your revolution," remarked Grantaire. "I do not execrate the present government. It is the crown tempered by the cotton night-cap, a sceptre ending in an umbrella. Indeed, in such weather as this, Louis Philippe might turn his royalty to two purposes; he might stretch out the sceptre-end against the people, and open the umbrella-end against the wrath of heaven."

The room was dark, heavy clouds completely veiled the daylight. There was no one in the wine-shop, nor in the streets, for everybody had gone "to watch the course of events."

"Is it midday or midnight?" asked Bossuet; "I can't see a thing. Gibelotte! Bring a light."

Grantaire was drinking sadly.

"Enjolras disdains me," he muttered. "Enjolras said: 'Joly is ill. Grantaire is drunk.' He sent Navet to Bossuet; and yet, if he had fetched me, I would have followed him. So much the worse for Enjolras! I will not go to his funeral."

This resolution formed, Bossuet, Grantaire, and Joly did not stir from the wine-shop. By two o'clock in the afternoon the table at which they sat was covered with empty bottles. Two candles burned on it, one in a copper candlestick, which was perfectly green with verdigris, the other in the neck of a cracked water-bottle. Grantaire had led Joly and Bossuet to wine; Bossuet and Joly had brought Grantaire back to joy.

As for Grantaire, he got beyond wine, at midday, as a

poor inspirer of dreams. Wine is not particularly valued by serious sots. In the matter of inebriety there is white magic and black magic; wine is only white magic. Grantaire, a bold drinker of dreams, was attracted rather than arrested by the blackness of a terrible fit of intoxication yawning before him. He had given up bottles and taken to the dram glass. The dram glass is an abyss. Having neither opium nor hasheesh at hand, and anxious to fill his brain with darkness, he had recourse to that frightful mixture of brandy, stout, and absinthe, which produces such terrible lethargies. Of these three vapours, beer, brandy, and absinthe, the lead of the soul is made. They are three forms of darkness. In them the celestial butterfly is drowned; and three dumb furies, Nightmare, Night, and Death, which hover over the sleeping Psyche, are produced therein in a membranous smoke, vaguely condensed into the wing of a bat.

Grantaire had not yet reached that pitiful phase; far from it. He was prodigiously gay, and Bossuet and Joly kept even with him. Grantaire added to the eccentric accentuation of words and ideas the divagation of gesture; he laid his left hand on his knee with a dignified air, his arm akimbo, with his neckcloth unloosed, straddling his stool, and his full glass in his right hand, he flung these solemn words at the stout servant-girl Matelote: —

"Open the gates of the palace! Let every man be a member of the French Academy, and have the right to embrace Ma'am Hucheloup! Let us drink."

And turning to Ma'am Hucheloup, he added: —

"Antique female, consecrated by custom, approach, that I may contemplate thee."

And Joly exclaimed: —

Batelote and Gibelotte, don't give Grantaire ady bore

drink. He is spending a frightful sum. Odly since this borning he has devoured in shabeful prodigality two francs, dwenty-five centibes."

And Grantaire went on: —

"Who has unhooked the stars without my leave, and placed them on the table in lieu of candles?"

Bossuet, though very drunk, had retained his calmness.

He was sitting on the sill of the open window, letting the rain drench his back, while he gazed at his two friends.

All at once he heard behind him a tumult, hurried footsteps, and shouts of "To arms!" He turned, and saw in the Rue St. Denis, at the end of the Rue de la Chanvrerie, Enjolras passing, carbine in hand, Gavroche with his pistol, Feuilly with his sabre, Courfeyrac with his sword, Jean Prouvaire with his musket, Combeferre with his fowling-piece, Bahorel with his blunderbuss, and the whole armed and stormy mob that followed them.

The Rue de la Chanvrerie was not a pistol-shot in length. Bossuet improvised a speaking-trumpet with his two hands around his mouth and shouted: —

"Courfeyrac! Courfeyrac! hullo there!"

Courfeyrac heard the summons, saw Bossuet, and moved a few steps down the Rue de la Chanvrerie, shouting a "What do you want?" which was crossed by a "Where are you going?"

"To make a barricade," answered Courfeyrac.

"Well, here! This is a good place! Make it here!"

"That is true, Eagle," remarked Courfeyrac.

And at a sign from Courfeyrac the rabble rushed into the Rue de la Chanvrerie.

CHAPTER III.

NIGHT BEGINS TO DESCEND ON GRANTAIRE.

THE ground was, in fact, admirably suited to the purpose. The entrance to the street was wide, the end narrowed into a blind alley, Corinth formed an obstacle in it, the Rue Mondétour could be easily barred on the right and left. No attack was possible, save from the Rue St. Denis,— that is to say, from the front and in the open. Bossuet drunk had the inspiration of Hannibal sober.

Terror seized on the whole street at the sound of the rabble rushing on. Not a passer-by but disappeared. More quickly than a flash of lightning, shops, stalls, back gates, doors, windows, Venetian blinds, sliding sashes and shutters of every sort were shut from the ground-floor to the roof, in the rear, to the right, and to the left. A terrified old woman fixed up a mattress before her window with two clothes-props, in order to deaden the sound of the musketry. The public-house alone remained open; and that for an excellent reason,— because the insurgents had rushed into it.

"O Lord, O Lord!" sighed Ma'am Hucheloup.

Bossuet ran down to meet Courfeyrac. Joly, who was at the window, shouted:—

"Courfeyrac, you ought to have brought an umbrella. You will cadch gold."

In a few minutes twenty iron bars were wrenched from the grated window in front of the inn, and ten yards of pavement were dug up. Gavroche and Bahorel

seized, as it passed, and overturned, the truck of a lime-dealer named Anceau. This truck contained three barrels of lime, which they placed under the piles of paving-stones. Enjolras had raised the cellar-flap, and all Ma'am Hucheloup's empty casks went to join the barrels of lime. Feuilly, with his fingers used to colouring the delicate sticks of fans, backed up the barrels and the truck with two massive piles of unhewn stone,— stones improvised, like everything else, and taken no one knew whence. The girders which propped up the front of an adjoining house were torn away and laid on the casks. When Courfeyrac and Bossuet turned round, half the street was already barred by a rampart taller than a man. There is nothing like the hand of the populace for building up anything that is built by demolishing.

Matelote and Gibelotte had mingled with the workmen. Gibelotte went backward and forward, loaded with rubbish. Her lassitude suited the barricade. She served out paving-stones as she would have served wine, with a sleepy look.

An omnibus drawn by two white horses passed the end of the street.

Bossuet sprang over the stones, ran, stopped the driver, ordered the passengers to get out, offered his hand to the "ladies," dismissed the conductor, and returned, dragging the vehicle and the horses by the bridles.

"Omnibuses," said he, "do not pass Corinth,— *non licet omnibus adire Corinthum.*"

A moment after, the unharnessed horses were straggling down the Rue Mondétour, and the omnibus, lying on its side, completed the barricade.

Ma'am Hucheloup, quite upset, had sought refuge on the first-floor.

Her eyes wandered, and looked without seeing. Her cries of alarm dared not issue from her throat.

"It is the end of the world!" she muttered.

Joly deposited a kiss on Ma'am Hucheloup's fat, red wrinkled neck, and said to Grantaire: "My dear fellow, I have always considered a woman's neck an infinitely delicate thing."

But Grantaire had reached the highest regions of dithyramb. When Matelote came up to the first-floor, he seized her round the waist, and burst into loud peals of laughter at the window.

"Matelote is ugly!" he cried; "Matelote is a dream of ugliness; Matelote is a chimera. Hear the secret of her birth: a Gothic Pygmalion, who was carving cathedral gargoyles, fell in love one fine morning with the most horrible of them all. He implored Love to give it life, and this produced Matelote. Look at her, fellow-citizens! She has chromate-of-lead-coloured hair, like Titian's mistress; and she is a good girl. I will answer that she fights well. Every good girl contains a hero. As for Mother Hucheloup, she is an old soldier. Look at her mustachios! She inherited them from her husband. She 's a regular trooper! She will fight too. The pair will terrify the whole district. Comrades, we will overthrow the government as true as there are fifteen intermediate acids between margaric acid and formic acid. However, it is a matter of perfect indifference to me. Gentlemen, my father always detested me because I could not understand mathematics. I understand only love and liberty. I am Grantaire, the good fellow! Never having had any money, I never acquired the habit of it, and for that reason I have never felt the lack of it; but had I been rich, there would be no more poor! You should have seen! Oh, if good hearts had large purses, how much better things would be! I can imagine the Saviour with Rothschild's fortune! How much good he would do! Matelote, embrace me! You are voluptuous and timid! You have cheeks that invite the kiss of a sister, and lips that invite the kiss of a lover!"

"Hold your tongue, Cask!" said Courfeyrac.

Grantaire replied: —

"I am the capitoul[1] and master of the Floral Games."

Enjolras, who was standing at the top of the barricade, gun in hand, raised his handsome, stern face. Enjolras, as we know, combined the Spartan with the Puritan. He would have died at Thermopylæ with Leonidas and burned Drogheda with Cromwell.

"Grantaire," he cried, "go and sleep off your wine elsewhere. This is the place for intoxication, and not for drunkenness. Do not dishonour the barricade."

These angry words produced a singular effect on Grantaire. It seemed as if a glass of cold water had been flung in his face. He seemed suddenly sobered.

He sat down, leaned his elbows on a table near the window, gazed at Enjolras with inexpressible tenderness, and said: —

"Let me sleep here."

"Go and sleep elsewhere," cried Enjolras.

But Grantaire, still fixing on him his tender and misty eyes, answered: —

"Let me sleep here, until I die here."

Enjolras looked at him disdainfully.

"Grantaire, you are incapable of believing, of thinking, of wishing, of living, and of dying."

Grantaire replied in a grave voice: —

"You will see."

He stammered a few more unintelligible words, then his head fell heavily on the table, and — as is usually the effect of the second period of inebriety into which Enjolras had roughly and suddenly thrust him — a moment later he was asleep.

[1] Municipal officer of Toulouse, where the Floral games are held.

CHAPTER IV.

AN EFFORT TO CONSOLE THE WIDOW HUCHELOUP.

BAHOREL, enraptured with the barricade, exclaimed: "Just see the street in full dress! How becoming it is!"

Courfeyrac, as he gradually demolished the public-house, tried to console the widowed landlady.

"Mother Hucheloup, were you not complaining the other day that you had been summoned by the police, because Gibelotte shook a counterpane out of the window?"

"Yes, my good Monsieur Courfeyrac. Oh, good gracious! are you going to put that table into your horror too? Yes, and the government fined me one hundred francs for that coverlid and a flower-pot that fell out of the garret window into the street. Is n't that abominable?"

"Well, Mother Hucheloup, we will avenge you."

Mother Hucheloup did not exactly see the advantage which she was to derive from these reprisals made on her behalf. She was satisfied after the fashion of that Arab woman who, having received a box on the ear from her husband, went to complain to her father, crying vengeance, and saying: "Father, you owe my husband affront for affront." The father asked: "On which cheek did you receive the blow?" "On the left cheek." The father boxed her right cheek, and said: "Now you are satisfied. Go and tell your husband that he buffeted my daughter, but I have buffeted his wife."

The rain had ceased. Recruits began to come in. Artisans brought under their blouses a barrel of gunpowder, a hamper containing carboys of vitriol, two or three carnival torches, and a basket full of lamps, "left over from the king's birthday." This festival was quite recent, having been celebrated on May 1. It was said that this ammunition was sent by a grocer in the Faubourg St. Antoine, named Pepin. The only street-lantern in the Rue de la Chanvrerie, and the corresponding one in the Rue St. Denis, and all those in the surrounding streets, were broken.

Enjolras, Combeferre, and Courfeyrac directed everything. Two barricades were being erected simultaneously, both of which were supported by Corinth, and formed a square. The larger one blocked the Rue de la Chanvrerie, and the smaller, the Rue Mondétour on the side of the Rue du Cygne. This latter barricade, which was very narrow, was made merely of barrels and paving-stones. There were about fifty workmen there. Thirty of them were armed with guns; for, on the road, they had effected a wholesale loan from a gunsmith's shop.

Nothing could be stranger or more motley than this troop. One had a sleeved waistcoat, a cavalry sabre, and a pair of holster pistols; another was in shirt sleeves, with a round hat, and a powder-flask hung at his side; while a third was cuirassed with nine sheets of gray paper, and was armed with a saddler's awl. There was one who shouted: "Let us exterminate them to the last man, and die at the point of our bayonet!" This man had no bayonet. Another displayed over his coat the cross-belt and cartridge-pouch of a National Guard, with these words sewed in red worsted on the cover of the pouch: "Public Order." There were plenty of muskets, bearing the numbers of various legions, few hats, no

neckties, a great many bare arms, and a few pikes. Add to this, all ages, all sorts of faces, short pale youths, and bronzed labourers from the docks. All were in a hurry; and while they assisted each other, they talked of the possible chances,—that they were sure of one regiment; that help would come about three o'clock in the morning; that Paris would rise,—terrible remarks, with which a sort of cordial joviality was mingled. They might have been taken for brothers, though they did not know each other's names. Great dangers have this admirable characteristic; they reveal the fraternity of strangers.

A fire had been lighted in the kitchen, and men were melting, in a bullet-mould, bowls, spoons, forks, and all the pewter articles of the establishment. They drank while they did this. Caps and slugs lay pell-mell on the table with glasses of wine. In the billiard-room, Ma'am Hucheloup, Matelote, and Gibelotte, variously affected by terror,—which stupefied one, made another breathless, and waked the third,—were tearing up old dishcloths and making lint. Three insurgents helped them,—three jolly, bearded, and mustached fellows, who picked away at the crash with the fingers of a seamstress and made them tremble.

The tall man, whom Courfeyrac, Combeferre, and Enjolras had noticed, as he joined the band at the corner of the Rue des Billettes, was working at the small barricade, and making himself useful. Gavroche was working in the large one. As for the young man who had waited for Courfeyrac at his lodgings, and had asked for M. Marius, he disappeared just about the time that the omnibus was overthrown.

Gavroche, completely carried away and radiant, had taken the arrangements on himself. He came, went, ascended, descended, went up again, bustled about, and

sparkled. He seemed to be there for the encouragement of all. Had he any incentive? Certainly,— his poverty. Had he wings? Certainly,— his joy. Gavroche was a whirlwind. He was incessantly seen, constantly heard. He filled the air, being everywhere at once. His was a sort of almost irritating ubiquity; it was impossible for him to rest. The enormous barricade felt him on its back. He bothered the idlers, excited the slothful, re-animated the weary, put the thoughtful out of all patience, made some gay, and gave others time to breathe, set some in a passion, and all in motion. He urged on a student and rebuked a workman; he alighted, paused, started off again, flew over the turmoil and the effort, leaped from one to the other, murmured, buzzed, and harassed the whole team,— a fly on the immense revolutionary coach.

Perpetual motion was in his little arms, and perpetual clamour in his little lungs.

"Push ahead! more paving-stones! more barrels! more vehicles! What are you about? A hod of plaster for me to stop this hole. Your barricade is very small. It must rise higher. Put everything into it, fling everything on it, stick everything in; smash up the house. A barricade is Mother Gibou's tea. Hold on! there 's a glass door."

This made the workmen exclaim:—

"A glass door! What do you suppose we can make of a glass door, Nosey!"

"Mosey yourselves!"[1] retorted Gavroche. "A glass door in a barricade is an excellent thing. Though it does not prevent an attack, it makes it awkward to take it. Have you never boned apples over a wall where there were broken bottles? A glass door cuts the corns of the National Guards when they try to climb the barricade.

[1] *Nosey*, in allusion to his bull-dog muzzle. He takes it to be: *mosey*, — clear out.

By Jove! glass is a treacherous thing. Well, you fellows have no very lively imagination."

He was furious over his triggerless pistol. He went from one to the other, demanding: "A gun! I want a gun! Why don't you give me a gun?"

"Give you a gun, indeed!" said Combeferre.

"Well, why not?" answered Gavroche. "I had one in 1830, when we quarrelled with Charles X."

Enjolras shrugged his shoulders.

"When all the men have guns, we will give them to boys."

Gavroche turned haughtily, and answered him: —

"If you are killed before me, I will take yours."

"Gutter-snipe!" said Enjolras

"Spooney!" said Gavroche.

A dandy, who had lost his way, and who lounged past the end of the street, created a diversion. Gavroche shouted to him: —

"Come with us, young man! What! will you do nothing for your poor old country?"

The dandy fled.

CHAPTER V.

PREPARATIONS.

THE journals of the day, which stated that the barricade in the Rue de la Chanvrerie, that "almost impregnable fortress," as they called it, reached the level of a first-floor, are mistaken. The truth is, that it did not exceed an average height of six or seven feet. It was so built that the combatants could, at will, either disappear behind it or ascend to its crest, by means of a quadruple row of paving-stones arranged like steps inside. On the outside, the front of the barricade, composed of piles of paving-stones and casks, held together by joists and planks, which were entangled in the wheels of the truck and the overturned omnibus, had a bristling and inextricable appearance.

A gap, big enough for a man to pass through, was left between the wall of the houses and the end of the barricade farthest from the wine-shop, so that an exit was possible. The pole of the omnibus was held upright by ropes, and a red flag fixed to this pole floated over the barricade.

The small Mondétour barricade, hidden behind the wine-shop, could not be seen. The two barricades combined formed a real redoubt. Enjolras and Courfeyrac had not thought it advisable to barricade the other portion of the Rue Mondétour, which opens on to the Markets, by way of the Rue des Prêcheurs, doubtless wishing to maintain a possibility of communication with the out-

side, and having but little fear of an attack from the difficult and dangerous Rue des Prêcheurs.

With the exception of this issue, which was left free, and which constituted what Folard would have called, in his strategic style, an intestine, and taking into account also the narrow passage in the Rue de la Chanvrerie, the interior of the barricade, where the wine-shop formed a salient angle, presented an irregular square, closed in on all sides. There was a space of twenty yards between the great barricade and the tall houses which formed the end of the street, so that it might be said that the barricade rested on these houses, which were all inhabited, but closed from top to bottom.

All this labour was completed, without any obstacle, in less than an hour, during which this handful of men had not seen a single bear-skin cap or bayonet. The few citizens who still ventured into the Rue St. Denis at this moment of riot gave a glance at the Rue de la Chanvrerie, saw the barricade, and redoubled their pace.

When the two barricades were completed, and the flag was hoisted, a table was pulled from the wine-shop into the street; and Courfeyrac got upon it. Enjolras brought up the square box, which Courfeyrac opened. It proved to be full of cartridges. When the mob saw the cartridges, the bravest trembled, and there was a moment's silence.

Courfeyrac distributed the cartridges with a smile.

Each man received thirty. Many had powder, and began making others with the bullets which had been cast. As for the powder-barrel, it was on a separate table, near the door, and was held in reserve. The call to arms, which ran through the whole of Paris, did not cease; but it had finally become a mere monotonous noise, to which they no longer paid any attention. This noise now retreated, and now came nearer, with mournful undulations.

Guns and carbines were loaded, all together, without haste, with solemn gravity. Enjolras then stationed three sentries outside the barricades, — one in the Rue de la Chanvrerie, the second in the Rue des Prêcheurs, the third at the corner of the Petite Truanderie.

Then, the barricades being built, the posts assigned, the guns loaded, the sentries set, the insurgents, alone in those terrible streets through which no one now passed, surrounded by dumb and, as it were, dead houses, in which no human movement palpitated, enveloped in increasing darkness, in the midst of that silence and obscurity in which they felt something advancing, and which had something tragical and terrifying about it, — isolated, armed, determined, and tranquil, — waited.

CHAPTER VI.

WAITING.

DURING the hours of waiting, what did they do? We are bound to tell, because this is a matter of history.

While the men made cartridges and the women lint, while a large stew-pan full of melted tin and lead, intended for the bullet-mould, smoked over a red-hot brazier, while the sentinels watched with guns on shoulder on the barricade, while Enjolras, whom it was impossible to distract, watched the sentries, Combeferre, Courfeyrac, Jean Prouvaire, Feuilly, Bossuet, Joly, Bahorel, and a few others, sought each other out and assembled, as in the most peaceful days of their student conversations; and in one corner of the wine-shop, converted into a casemate, only two paces away from the barricade which they had raised, with their muskets, loaded and primed, leaning against the backs of their chairs, these fine young men, so near their last hour, began to recite love verses.

What verses? Here they are: —

Do you remember our sweet life,
When both were young, and knew
Of nought on earth was worth a wish
But to love and look our best, — we two;

When all your birthdays, added to mine,
A total of forty would not bring,
And when, in our humble and cosey roost,
All, even the Winter, to us was Spring?

Rare days ! Then virtuous Manuel stalked,
Paris a godly life essayed,
Foy thundered, and in your waist a pin
Sharp pricked my hand that strayed !

Everything ogled you. At Prado's
Where you and your briefless barrister dined,
You were so pretty, the roses, I thought,
Turned to look at you from behind.

They seemed to whisper : " How fair she is !
What wavy tresses ! What sweet perfume !
Under her mantle she hides her wings ;
Her flower of a bonnet is just in bloom ! "

I roamed with you, pressing your dainty arm ;
And the passers thought that Love, in play,
Had mated, in unison so sweet,
The gallant April with gentle May.

We lived so merrily, all by ourselves,
On love, — that choice forbidden fruit;
And never a word my mouth could speak
But your heart already had followed suit.

The Sorbonne was that bucolic place
Where night and day my passion throve :
'T is thus that an ardent youngster makes
The Latin Quarter a Land of Love.

O Place Maubert ! O Place Dauphine !
Sky-parlour reaching heavenward far,
In whose depths, when you drew your stocking on,
I saw, methought, a shining star.

Hard-learned Plato I 've long forgot :
Not Malebranche nor Lamennais
Taught me such faith in Providence
As the flower which in your bosom lay.

You were my servant and I your slave :
Oh, golden attic ! Oh, joy, at morn,
To lace you, see you dress, and view
Your girlish face in that glass forlorn !

Ah, who indeed could ever forget
The sky and dawn commingling still, —
That ribbony, flowery, gauzy bloom,
And love's sweet nonsense talked at will ?

Our garden a pot of tulips was ;
Your petticoat curtained the window-pane ;
I took for myself the earthen bowl,
And passed you the cup of porcelain.

What huge disasters made us laugh !
Your muff afire ; your tippet lost ;
And that cherished portrait of Shakspeare, sold,
One hungry evening, at half its cost.

I was a beggar, and you were kind :
A kiss from your fair round arms I 'd steal,
While the folio-Dante we gayly spread
With a hundred chestnuts, our frugal meal.

And oh ! when first my favoured mouth
A kiss to your burning lips had given,
You were dishevelled and all aglow ;
I, pale with rapture, believed in Heaven.

Do you remember our countless joys ?
Those neckerchiefs rumpled every day ?
Alas! what sighs from our boding hearts
The infinite skies have borne away !

The hour, the spot, these youthful memories recalled, a few stars which were beginning to glisten in the sky, the funereal repose of the deserted streets, the imminence of the inexorable adventure in preparation, lent a pathetic charm to these verses murmured in a low voice in the twilight by Jean Prouvaire, who, as we said, was a gentle poet.

Meantime a lamp had been lit on the small barricade ; and on the large one, one of those wax torches, such as may be seen on Shrove Tuesday in front of vehicles crowded with masks on their way to the Courtille.

These torches, we know, came from the Faubourg St. Antoine.

The torch was placed in a sort of cage of paving-stones, closed on three sides to protect it from the wind, and so arranged that all the light should fall on the flag. The street and the barricade remained plunged in darkness, and nothing was visible save the red flag, terribly illumined, as if by an enormous dark-lantern. This light added a strange and dreadful tinge of purple to the scarlet of the flag.

CHAPTER VII.

THE RECRUIT OF THE RUE DES BILLETTES.

NIGHT had quite set in; nothing occurred. Only confused noises, and now and then fusillades were heard; but they were rare, badly maintained, and distant. This respite, which was prolonged, was a sign that the government was taking its time and collecting its forces. These fifty men were awaiting the coming of sixty thousand.

Enjolras was attacked by that impatience which seizes on strong souls when they stand on the threshold of tremendous events. He looked up Gavroche, who was busy manufacturing cartridges in the ground-floor room, by the dubious light of two candles placed on the bar by way of precaution, on account of the gunpowder sprinkled over the tables. These two candles threw no light outside. Moreover, the insurgents had been careful to allow no light on the upper floors.

Gavroche was at this moment greatly occupied, though not precisely with his cartridges.

The recruit from the Rue des Billettes had just come into the room and seated himself at the least lighted table. A Brown Bess of the large model had fallen to his share, and he held it between his legs. Gavroche, up to this moment, distracted by a hundred "amusing" things, had not even seen this man.

When he entered, Gavroche looked after him mechanically, admiring his musket; then, suddenly, when the man was seated, the gutter-snipe rose. Those who might have watched this man up to this moment would have seen that he had observed everything about the barricade and the band of insurgents with singular attention; but when he entered the room he fell into a state of contemplation, and seemed to see nothing of what was going on. The boy approached this pensive personage, and began to walk around him on tiptoe, as one moves round a man whom one is afraid of awaking. At the same time, over his childish face, at once so impudent and so serious, so giddy and so profound, so gay and so heart-rending, passed all the grimaces of an old man which signify: "Oh, stuff! It is impossible! I must see double; I am dreaming. Can it be? No, it is not. Yes, it is. No, it is not." Gavroche balanced himself on his heels, clenched his fists in his pockets, moved his neck about like a bird, and expended all the sagacity of his lower lip in an enormous pout. He was amazed, uncertain, incredulous, convinced, and dazzled. He had the look of the chief of the eunuchs in the slave-market, discovering a Venus among a lot of frights, and the air of an amateur recognizing a Raphael in a pile of daubs. His whole soul was at work,—the instinct that scents out, and the intellect that combines. It was plain that an event had happened to Gavroche. It was when he was deepest in thought that Enjolras accosted him.

"You are little," he said; "you will not be seen. Go

out of the barricades, slip along close to the houses, move about through the streets, and come back and tell me what is going on."

Gavroche drew himself up.

"So little chaps are good for something? That 's lucky! I 'm off. In the mean while, trust to the little fellows, and distrust the big blokes;" and Gavroche, raising his head and dropping his voice, added, as he pointed to the man of the Rue des Billettes: "You see that tall fellow?"

"Well?"

"He 's a police spy."

"Are you sure?"

"Not a fortnight back he pulled me down by the ear from the cornice of the Pont Royal, where I was taking the air."

Enjolras hurriedly left the street-arab, and whispered a few words to a labourer from the wine-docks, who happened to be close by. The labourer went out and returned almost immediately, followed by three others. The four men — four broad-shouldered porters — stationed themselves silently behind the table at which the man was seated. They were evidently ready to fall upon him.

Then Enjolras approached the man, and asked: —

"Who are you?"

At this sudden question the man started. He looked into the very depths of Enjolras's candid eyes, and seemed to read his thoughts. He gave a smile, which was at once the most disdainful, energetic, and resolute smile possible, and answered, with haughty gravity:

"I see what you mean. Well, yes."

"Are you a spy?"

"I am an agent of the authorities!"

"And your name is — "

"Javert."

Enjolras gave the four men a sign. In the twinkling of an eye, before Javert had time to turn round, he was collared, thrown down, bound, and searched.

On him was found a small round card pasted between two bits of glass, and bearing on one side the arms of France, with the motto: "Be watchful, be vigilant!" and on the other this note: "JAVERT, Police Inspector, fifty-two years of age," and the signature of the Prefect of Police, M. Gisquet.

He had also a watch and a purse containing some pieces of gold. Both were left him. Under his watch, at the bottom of his fob, was found a paper in an envelope, which Enjolras unfolded, and on which he read these lines, written by the Prefect of Police himself:

"So soon as his political mission is accomplished, Inspector Javert will assure himself, by a special watch, whether it be true that criminals assemble on the slope of the right bank of the Seine, near the bridge of Jena."

The search ended, Javert was raised from the ground, his arms were tied behind his back, and he was fastened to that famous post, in the middle of the room, which in olden times gave its name to the wine-shop.

Gavroche, who had watched the whole scene and approved of everything with a silent movement of his head, went up to Javert, and said: —

"The mouse has trapped the cat."

All this took place so quickly that it was over before those outside the wine-shop were aware of it.

Javert had not uttered a cry. When they saw him bound to the post, Courfeyrac, Bossuet, Combeferre, Joly, and the men scattered over the two barricades, flocked in.

Javert, with his back to the post, and so surrounded

with ropes that he could not stir, held up his head with the intrepid serenity of a man who has never lied.

" He is a police spy," said Enjolras. And turning to Javert: " You will be shot ten minutes before the barricade is taken."

Javert replied, in his most imperious tone: —

" Why not at once? "

" We must save our powder."

" Then settle the affair with a knife."

" Spy," said the handsome Enjolras, " we are judges, not assassins."

Then he called Gavroche.

" You! Be off now! Do what I told you!"

" I am off," cried Gavroche; but he stopped just as he reached the door: —

" By the way, give me his gun! You may have the musician, but I want his clarinet."

The boy made a military salute, and slipped gayly through the opening in the large barricade.

CHAPTER VIII.

WAS CABBAGE-HEAD THE TRUE NAME OF THE MAN WHO CALLED HIMSELF CABBAGE-HEAD?

THE tragic picture we have undertaken would not be complete, the reader would not see in their exact and real relief those great moments of social birth-pangs and revolutionary child-birth, which contain convulsive throes blended with effort, if we were to omit from our sketch an incident full of epic and savage horror, which occurred almost immediately after Gavroche's departure.

Bands of rioters, it is well known, resemble a snow-ball, and, as they roll along, collect many tumultuous men. These men do not ask each other whence they come. Among the passers-by who joined the band led by Enjolras, Combeferre, and Courfeyrac, there was a man wearing a porter's jacket, much worn at the shoulders, who gesticulated and vociferated, and had the appearance of a drunken savage. This man, whose nickname was the Cabbage-head, and who was, moreover, wholly unknown to those who pretended to know him, was seated, in a state of real or feigned intoxication,

with several others, round a table which they had dragged outside the wine-shop. This Cabbage-head, while making those who vied with him drink, seemed to be gazing thoughtfully at the large house behind the barricade, whose five stories commanded the whole street and faced the Rue St. Denis. All at once he exclaimed: —

"Do you know what, comrades? We must fire from that house. When we are at the windows, hang me if any one can come up the street."

"Yes, but the house is closed," said one of the drinkers.

"We 'll knock."

"They won't open."

"Then we 'll break in the door."

The Cabbage-head ran up to the door, which had a very massive knocker, and rapped. The door was not opened. He rapped again. No one answered. He gave a third rap. The silence continued.

"Is there any one in here?" shouted the Cabbage-head.

But nothing stirred. Then he seized a musket and began to hammer the door with the butt-end.

It was an ancient alley door, low, narrow, vaulted, solid, made of oak, lined with sheet-iron inside, with a heavy bar, — a thorough prison postern. The blows from the musket-butt made the whole house tremble, but did not shake the door.

The inhabitants, however, were probably alarmed, for a little, square trap-window was at length lit up and opened on the third story, and at this opening appeared a candle and the sanctimonious, terrified face of a gray-haired man, who was the porter.

The man who was knocking left off.

"What do you want, gentlemen?" asked the porter.

"Open the door!" said Cabbage-head.

"I cannot, gentlemen."

"Open, I tell you!"

" Impossible, gentlemen. "

Cabbage-head raised his musket and took aim at the porter; but as he was below, and it was very dark, the porter did not notice the fact.

" Will you open? — yes or no. "

" No, gentlemen. "

" You really mean it? "

" I say no, my good — "

The porter did not finish his sentence. The musket was fired. The bullet entered under his chin and came out at the nape of his neck, after passing through the jugular vein.

The old man fell in a heap, without heaving a sigh. The candle fell and went out, and nothing more was visible save a motionless head lying on the sill of the window, and a small wreath of white smoke floating off toward the roof.

" There! " said the Cabbage-head, as he let the butt of his gun fall on the pavement again.

He had scarcely uttered the word when he felt a hand laid on his shoulder with the weight of an eagle's talon, and he heard a voice say: —

" On your knees! "

The murderer turned, and saw before him Enjolras's cold, white face. Enjolras held a pistol in his hand. He had hurried to the spot when he heard the shot. With his left hand he clutched the Cabbage-head's collar, blouse, shirt, and braces.

" On your knees! " he repeated.

And with an authoritative motion, the frail young man of twenty bent the muscular and robust porter like a reed, and forced him to kneel in the mud.

Cabbage-head tried to resist, but he seemed to have been seized by a superhuman hand.

Enjolras, pale, with bare neck, dishevelled hair, and

feminine face, had at this moment somewhat of the antique Themis about him. His dilated nostrils, his downcast eyes, gave to his implacable Greek profile that expression of wrath and that expression of chastity which, in the opinion of the antique world, beseem justice.

All the insurgents hastened toward them, then ranged themselves in a circle at a distance, feeling that it was impossible for them to utter a word in the presence of the thing that they were about to witness. Cabbage-head, conquered, no longer attempted to struggle, and trembled in every limb. Enjolras loosed his grasp and took out his watch.

"Reflect," said he. "Pray or think! You have one minute."

"Mercy!" stammered the murderer; then he hung his head and muttered a few inarticulate oaths.

Enjolras did not take his eyes from his watch. He let the minute pass, then he put the watch again in his fob. This done, he seized the Cabbage-head by the hair, as the latter clung to his knees with a yell, and placed the muzzle of the pistol to his ear. Many of those intrepid men, who had so tranquilly entered upon the most frightful of adventures, turned away their heads.

An explosion was heard; the assassin fell to the pavement, face downward.

Enjolras drew himself up and looked around him with a stern air of conviction. Then he spurned the corpse with his foot, and said: —

"Throw that outside."

Three men raised the body of the wretch, which was still writhing in the last mechanical convulsions of expiring life, and threw it over the small barricade into Mondétour Lane.

Enjolras stood pensive. Grand and unknown shadows spread slowly over his fearful composure. Presently he raised his voice. All were silent.

"Citizens," said Enjolras, "what that man did is frightful, and what I have done is horrible. He killed; that is why I killed him. I was obliged to do so, for insurrection must have its discipline. Assassination is even more of a crime here than elsewhere. We stand under the eye of Revolution, we are the priests of the Republic, we are the victims of duty, and we must not do aught that would bring calumny upon our combat. I therefore tried and condemned this man to death. For my own part, constrained to do what I have done, but, abhorring it, I have also tried myself; and you shall shortly see what sentence I have passed."

All who listened trembled.

"We will share your fate," exclaimed Combeferre.

"Be it so!" continued Enjolras. "One word more. In executing that man, I obeyed Necessity; but Necessity is a monster of the old world. Its true name is Fatality. Now, it is the law of progress that monsters should disappear before angels, and Fatality vanish before Fraternity. It is a bad moment to utter the word *love*. No matter, I utter it, and I glorify it. Love, the future is thine. Death, I make use of thee, but I abhor thee. Citizens, in the future there will be neither darkness nor thunder-bolts, neither savage ignorance nor bloody retaliation. As there will be no more Satan, there will be no more Michael. In the future no man will kill another man; the earth will be radiant, and the human race will love. The day will come, citizens, when all will be concord, harmony, light, joy, and life; and to the end that it may come, we are about to die."

Enjolras was silent. His virgin lips closed; and he stood for some time on the spot where he had shed blood,

motionless as a marble statue. His staring eyes caused those about him to speak in whispers.

Jean Prouvaire and Combeferre shook hands silently, and, leaning against each other in an angle of the barricade, gazed, with an admiration which was partly compassion, at the grave young man,—executioner and priest, who possessed at once the brilliancy of crystal and the hardness of rock.

Let us say at once that after the action, when the corpses were conveyed to the morgue and searched, a police agent's card was found on the Cabbage-head. The author of this work had in his hands, in 1848, the special report on this subject made to the Prefect of Police in 1832.

Let us add that, if we may believe a strange but probably well-founded police tradition, Cabbage-head was Claquesous. It is certainly true that after the death of Cabbage-head, Claquesous was never heard of again. He left no trace of his disappearance. He seemed to have melted into the invisible. His life had been all gloom; his end was night.

The whole insurgent band were still suffering from the emotion of the tragic case, so quickly tried and so quickly ended, when Courfeyrac again saw on the barricade the short young man who had come to his lodgings that morning to inquire for Marius. This lad, who had a bold and reckless air, had come by night to join the insurgents.

BOOK XIII.

MARIUS ENTERS THE SHADOW.

CHAPTER I.

FROM THE RUE PLUMET TO THE RUE ST. DENIS.

THE voice which summoned Marius through the twilight to the barricade in the Rue de la Chanvrerie produced on him the effect of the voice of destiny. He wished to die, and the opportunity offered; he rapped at the door of the tomb, and a hand held out the key to him from the shadows. Such gloomy openings in the darkness before despair are tempting. Marius removed the bar which had so often allowed him to pass, left the garden, and said: "I will go."

Mad with grief, feeling nothing fixed and solid in his brain, incapable henceforth of accepting anything of destiny, after those two months spent in the intoxication of youth and love, crushed by all the reveries of despair at once, he had only one wish left, — to end all quickly.

He set out rapidly. He happened to be armed, as he had Javert's pistols in his pocket.

The young man, of whom he fancied that he had caught a glimpse, had vanished from his sight in the street.

Marius, who left the Rue Plumet by the boulevard, crossed the Esplanade and the bridge of the Invalides, the Champs Elysées, the Place Louis XV., and reached the Rue de Rivoli. The shops were open there, the gas blazed under the arcades, ladies were making purchases, people were eating ices at the Café Laiter and devouring little cakes at the English pastry-cook's. A few post-chaises were leaving the Hotel des Princes and Hotel Meurice at a gallop.

Marius entered the Rue St. Honoré by the passage Delorme. There the shops were closed, the tradesmen were conversing before their half-open doors, people walked about, lamps were lighted, and from the first-floor upward, the houses were illumined as usual. Cavalry were stationed on the Place du Palais Royal.

Marius followed the Rue St. Honoré. The farther he got from the Palais Royal, the fewer windows were lit up; the shops were entirely closed, nobody was conversing on the thresholds, the street grew darker, and at the same time the crowd denser. The passers-by had now become a crowd. No one seemed to speak in this crowd, and yet a low, deep murmur arose from it.

Near the Arbre-Sec Fountain there were "mobs," motionless and sombre groups standing among those who came and went, like stones in the midst of a running stream.

At the entrance to the Rue des Prouvaires the crowd no longer moved. It was a resisting, massive, solid, compact, almost impenetrable block of people packed together, conversing in low voices. There were hardly any black coats or round hats present, only smock-frocks, blouses, caps, bristling beards, and sickly faces. This mulitude wavered confusedly to and fro in the night mist. Its whispering had the hoarse accent of a shudder. Though no one moved, a trampling in the mud was heard.

Beyond this dense crowd, in the Rue du Roule, the Rue des Prouvaires, and the extension of the Rue St. Honoré, there was not a single window where a candle burned. The solitary and decreasing rows of lanterns alone could be seen vanishing down those streets in the distance. Street-lanterns at that date resembled large red stars suspended from ropes, and cast upon the pavement a shadow like that of a huge spider. These streets, however, were not deserted. Piles of muskets, moving bayonets, and troops bivouacking could be distinguished in them. No curious person went beyond that limit. There circulation ceased. There the mob ended and the army began.

Marius longed with the longing of a man who had lost all hope. He had been summoned; he needs must go. He found means to traverse the crowd and the bivouacking troops; he shunned the patrols and avoided the sentries. He made a circuit, reached the Rue de Béthysie, and proceeded in the direction of the Markets. At the corner of the Rue des Bourdonnais, the lanterns ceased.

After crossing the zone of the mob, he left the troops behind him; he now found himself in something frightful. There was not a wayfarer, nor a soldier, nor a light; no one, — solitude, silence, night, and a strangely piercing cold. Entering a street was like entering a cellar.

Still he kept on.

Some one passed him at a run. Was it a man? A woman? Were there several of them? He could not have said. It had passed and vanished.

By constant circuits he reached a lane, which he judged to be the Rue de la Poterie; toward the middle of that lane he stumbled against an obstacle. He stretched out his hands and found that it was an overturned cart; his foot recognized pools of water, holes, paving-stones, both scattered and piled up. A barricade had been begun, and then abandoned. He clambered over the stones, and

soon found himself on the other side of the obstacle. He walked very close to the street posts, and felt his way along the house walls. A little beyond the barricade he fancied that he saw something white before him. He approached; it assumed a form. It was a pair of white horses, — the omnibus horses unharnessed by Bossuet in the morning, which had wandered, hap-hazard, from street to street all day, and had at last stopped here, with the stolid patience of animals, who no more comprehend the actions of man than man comprehends the actions of Providence,

Marius left the horses behind him. As he entered a street which seemed to be the Rue du Contrat-social, a musket-shot, which came no one could say whence, and traversed the darkness at random, whizzed close by him, and pierced a copper shaving-dish hanging above his head over a hair-dresser's shop. In 1846, this dish with the hole in it was still to be seen in the Rue du Contrat-social, at the corner of the pillars of the Markets. This shot was a sign of life. From that moment nothing further occurred.

The whole journey resembled a descent down black steps. Nevertheless, Marius still moved on.

CHAPTER II.

AN OWL'S VIEW OF PARIS.

ANY being hovering over Paris at that moment, with the wings of a bat or an owl, would have had a gloomy spectacle beneath his eyes.

All that old quarter of the Markets, which is like a city within a city, which is traversed by the Rues St. Denis and St. Martin, and by a thousand lanes, — a region which the insurgents had converted into their redoubt and parade ground, — would have appeared like an enormous black hole dug in the centre of Paris. There the eye settled on an abyss. Owing to the broken lamps and the closed shutters, all brilliancy, life, noise, and movement had ceased. The invisible police of the revolt were everywhere on the watch, and maintained order, — that is to say, night. To drown small numbers in vast obscurity, to multiply each combatant by the possibilities which that obscurity contains, are the necessary tactics of insurrection. At nightfall every window in which a candle gleamed received a bullet. The light was extinguished, sometimes the occupant was killed. Hence, nothing stirred. There was nought but terror, mourning, stupor in the houses; in the streets, a sort of sacred horror. Not even the long rows of windows and stories, the indentations of chimneys and roofs, and the vague reflections which glisten on the wet and muddy pavements were visible. An eye which looked down from above on this mass of shadows might, perhaps,

have caught an indistinct gleam here and there, which made the broken, strange lines, and the profile of odd buildings, stand out in bold relief, — something like lights flitting to and fro in ruins; at such points were the barricades. The rest was a lake of darkness and mystery, oppressive, misty, and funereal, above which, in motionless and mournful outlines, rose the tower of St. Jacques, the Church of St. Merry, and two or three more of those grand edifices of which man makes giants and night makes phantoms.

All around this deserted and alarming labyrinth, in those districts where the circulation of Paris was not stopped, and where a few lanterns still glistened, the aerial observer might have distinguished the metallic scintillation of swords and bayonets, the dull rumble of artillery, and the buzz of silent battalions, whose numbers grew from moment to moment, — a fearful girdle, slowly contracting and closing in around the revolt.

The invested district was now but a sort of monstrous cavern; everything there seemed asleep or motionless, and, as we have seen, none of the streets by which it could be approached offered aught save darkness, — a savage darkness, full of snares, full of unknown and terrible collisions, into which it was alarming to penetrate, and in which it was horrible to remain, where those who entered shuddered before those who awaited them, and those who waited shuddered before those who were about to come. Invisible combatants were intrenched at the corner of every street, — sepulchral traps hidden in the thickness of night. All was over. No other light could be hoped for there, henceforth, save the flash of musketry; no other meeting than the sudden and rapid apparition of death. Where? How? When? They did not know; but it was certain and inevitable. There, on that spot marked out for the contest, the government

and the insurrection, National Guard and popular societies, trades-people and rioters, were groping their way toward each other. There was the same necessity for both. The only issue henceforth possible was to be killed or to conquer. It was a situation so extreme, an obscurity so powerful, that the most timid felt resolute and the most daring terrified.

On both sides, moreover, there was equal fury, obstinacy, and determination. On one side, to advance was death, and no one dreamed of retreat; on the other, to remain was death, and no one thought of flight.

All must be over on the morrow, — victory must rest with one side or the other; insurrection must prove itself either a revolution or a riot. The government understood this as well as the partisans; the pettiest tradesman felt it. Hence came an agonizing thought which mingled with the impenetrable gloom of this district, where all was about to be decided; hence came a redoubled anxiety around this silence, whence a catastrophe was soon to issue. Only one sound was heard, a sound as heart-rending as a death-rattle, as menacing as a malediction, — the tocsin of St. Merry. Nothing could be more blood-curdling than the clamour of that distracted and despairing bell as it wailed amid the darkness.

As often happens, Nature seemed to have fallen into accord with the purposes of men. Nothing disturbed the mournful harmonies of the whole scene. The stars had disappeared, heavy clouds filled the entire horizon with their melancholy masses. A black sky overhung the dead streets, as if an inmense pall were cast over the immense tomb.

While a battle, which was as yet wholly political, was preparing on the same site which had already witnessed so many revolutionary events; while young men, the

secret associations, the schools, in the name of principle, and the middle classes in the name of interest, were coming together to try a final fall, — while all were hastening to the spot and urging on the last and decisive hour of the crisis, far away beyond that fatal region, in the lowest depths of the unfathomable cavities of that wretched old Paris which disappears under the splendour of happy and opulent Paris, the gloomy voice of the people was heard growling hoarsely, — a startling and sacred voice, composed of the yell of the brute and the word of God, which terrifies the weak and warns the wise, and which comes both from below like the voice of the lion, and from above like the voice of the thunder.

CHAPTER III.

THE EXTREME BRINK.

MARIUS had reached the Markets.

There all was calmer, darker, and even more motionless than in the neighbouring streets. It seemed as if the icy peace of the tomb had emerged from the ground and overspread the sky.

A ruddy tinge, however, brought out against the black background the tall roofs of the houses which barred the Rue de la Chanvrerie in the direction of St. Eustache. It was the reflection of the torch burning on the Corinth barricade. Marius walked toward that ruddy glow. It led him to the vegetable Market, and he caught a glimpse of the dark Rue des Prêcheurs, into which he turned. The sentry of the insurgents, watching at the other end, did not see him. He felt himself quite close to what he was seeking, and he walked on tiptoe. He thus reached the corner of that short section of Mondétour Lane which was, as will be remembered the sole communication which Enjolras had maintained with the outer world. At the corner of the last house on his left, he thrust his head forward and peeped into the lane.

A little beyond the dark corner formed by the meeting of the lane and the Rue de la Chanvrerie, which cast a broad patch of shadow, in which he was himself buried, he saw a gleam on the pavement, a portion of the wine-shop, and, farther on, a lamp flickering in a sort of shapeless niche, and men crouching down with guns on their

knees; all this was scarce ten yards from him. It was the interior of the barricade.

The houses that lined the right-hand side of the lane hid from him the rest of the wine-shop, the large barricade, and the flag.

Marius had but one step more to take.

Then the unhappy young man sat down on a stone post, folded his arms, and thought of his father.

He thought of that heroic Colonel Pontmercy who had been such a proud soldier, who had defended the frontier of France under the republic, and reached the frontier of Asia under the Emperor; who had seen Genoa, Alexandria, Milan, Turin, Madrid, Vienna, Dresden, Berlin, and Moscow; who had left on all the victorious battle-fields of Europe drops of the same blood which Marius had in his veins; who had grown gray before his time in discipline and command; who had lived with his sword-belt buckled, his epaulets falling on his breast, his cockade blackened by powder, his brow furrowed by his helmet, in barracks, in camp, in the bivouac, and in hospitals; and who, at the expiration of twenty years, had returned from the great wars with a scarred cheek and a smiling face, simple, tranquil, admirable, pure as an infant, having done everything for France, and nothing against her.

He said to himself, that his own day had now come; that his hour had at length struck; that after his father's example, he too would be brave, intrepid, and bold, would rush to meet the bullets, offer his breast to the bayonet, shed his blood, seek the enemy, seek death; that he in his turn was about to wage war, and go into the battle-field; that the battle-field he would enter was the street, and the war he was about to wage was civil war.

He saw civil war open before him like a gulf, and into this he was about to fall.

He shuddered.

He thought of his father's sword, which his grandfather had sold to an old clothes-dealer, and which he had so painfully regretted. He said to himself that this chaste and valiant sword had done well to escape from him, and to disappear angrily in the darkness; that it fled away thus because it was intelligent, and had foreseen the future, — the riots, the war of the gutters, the war of paving-stones, fusillades from cellar-traps, blows dealt and received from behind. Coming from Marengo and Austerlitz, it was unwilling to go to the Rue de la Chanvrerie; and after what it had done with the father it refused to do this with the son. He said to himself that if that sword were here, if, after receiving it at his dead father's bedside, he had dared to take it and carry it into this nocturnal combat between Frenchmen in the streets, it would assuredly have burned his hands, and have flashed before him like the glaive of the archangel! He said to himself that it was fortunate it was not there, but had disappeared, — that this was well, this was just; that his grandfather had been the true guardian of his father's glory; and that it was better for the colonel's sword to have been put up at auction, sold to the second-hand dealer, or broken up as old iron, than that it should to-day make his country bleed.

And then he began to weep bitterly.

This was horrible. But what was he to do? He could not live without Cosette. Since she had departed, all that was left him was to die. Had he not pledged her his word of honour that he would die? She had gone away knowing this; it was plain that she was pleased that Marius should die. Then it was clear that she no longer loved him, since she had gone away thus without warning, without a word, without a letter, and yet she knew his address! Of what use was it to live, and why should he live now? And then, to have come so far only to recoil! To approach the danger and then run away! To

look at the barricade and then slip off! To slip off, trembling, and saying: "After all, I have had enough of it. I have seen it, that is enough; this is civil war, and I will be off." To abandon his friends who expected him; who perhaps needed him; who were a mere handful against a whole army! To be false to everything at once, — to love, to friendship, to his word! To give to his cowardice the pretext of patriotism! Oh, that was impossible! And if his father's ghost were there in the shadows, and saw him shrink, it would lash him with the flat of its sword, and cry: "Forward, coward!"

A prey to these conflicting thoughts, he hung his head.

Suddenly he raised it again. A sort of splendid rectification had just taken place in his mind. There is a widening of thought peculiar to the vicinity of the tomb; to be near death makes a man see clearly. The vision of the action upon which he felt that he was perhaps about to enter, no longer appeared to him lamentable, but superb. The war of the street became transfigured by some indescribable inward working of his soul, before his mental eye. All the tumultuous interrogation points of revery crowded back upon him, but without troubling him. He left not a single one unanswered.

Why should his father be indignant? Are there not cases in which insurrection attains to the dignity of duty? What was there degrading for the son of Colonel Pontmercy in the combat which was about to begin? It is no longer Montmirail or Champaubert; it is something else. It is no longer a question of sacred territory, but of a holy idea. The country mourns; be it so, but humanity applauds. But is it true that the country mourns? France bleeds, but liberty smiles; and at liberty's smile, France forgets her wound. And then, if we view things from a higher point still, why do we talk of civil war?

What is the meaning of civil war? Is there such a

thing as foreign war? Is not all war between men, war between brothers? War can only be qualified by its object. There is neither foreign war nor civil war; there is only just and unjust war. Up to the day when the great human covenant is concluded, war, at least that which is the effort of the hurrying future against the laggard past, may be necessary. What reproach can be urged against such war? War does not become a disgrace, or the sword a dagger, unless it is used to destroy right, progress, reason, civilization, and truth. In such a case, war, whether civil or foreign, is iniquitous; its true name is crime. Outside the pale of that holy thing, justice, by what right does one form of war despise another? By what right does the sword of Washington disown the pike of Camille Desmoulins? Which is the greater, Leonidas contending against the foreigner, or Timoleon against the tyrant? One is the defender, the other is the liberator. Shall we, without regarding the object, brand every appeal to arms within the limits of a city? If so, mark with contumely Brutus, Marcel, Arnold of Blankenheim, and Coligny. Hedgerow war? Street war? Why not? Such was the war of Ambiorix, of Artevelde, of Marnix, and Pelagius. But Ambiorix struggled against Rome, Artevelde against France, Marnix against Spain, and Pelagius against the Moors, — all against the invader. Well, monarchy is an invader; oppression is an invader; divine right is an invader. Despotism violates the moral frontier, as invasion does the geographical frontier. To expel the tyrant or expel the English, is, in either case, a reconquest of territory. There comes an hour when a protest is insufficient; after philosophy, action is needed; live force completes what the idea has sketched out; Prometheus bound begins, Aristogiton ends; the Encyclopædia enlightens minds, and August 10 electrifies them. After Æschylus, Thrasybulus; after Diderot, Danton.

Multitudes have a tendency to accept a master. Their mass testifies to apathy. A crowd is easily led into habits of obedience, as a whole. Men must be stirred up, driven, roughly handled by the very blessing of their deliverance; their eyes must be hurt by the truth, light must be hurled at them in terrible handfuls. They must themselves be to some extent thunderstruck by their own salvation; the lighting flash awakes them. Hence the necessity of tocsins and wars. Great combatants must arise, illumine the nations by their audacity, and shake up that sorry humanity overshadowed by divine right, Cæsarian glory, force, fanaticism, irresponsible power, and absolute majesties,—a mob stupidly occupied in contemplating these gloomy triumphs of the night in their twilight splendour. Down with the tyrant! But what tyrant? Of whom are you talking? Do you call Louis Philippe a tyrant? No; no more than Louis XVI. Both are what history calls good kings; but principles are not to be parcelled out, the logic of truth is rectilinear. It is the peculiarity of truth to be lacking in complaisance; no concessions, therefore. Every encroachment on man must be repressed. There is the right divine in Louis XVI., there is the "because a Bourbon" in Louis Philippe; both represent to a certain extent the confiscation of right, and they must be combated in order to sweep away universal usurpation. It must be so, for France is always the one to begin. When the master fails in France, he fails everywhere. In a word, what cause is more just, and, consequently, what war is greater, than that which re-establishes social truth, gives back her throne to Liberty, restores the people to the people, sovereignty to man, replaces the crown on the head of France, restores reason and equity in their plenitude, suppresses every germ of antagonism by giving back individuality, annihilates the obstacle which royalty offers to universal concord, and places the human race once

again on a level with right? Such wars build up peace. A vast fortress of prejudices, privileges, superstitions, falsehoods, exactions, abuses, violences, iniquities, and darkness is still standing on the earth with its towers of hatred. It must be cast down. The monstrous mass must crumble away. To conquer at Austerlitz is great; to take the Bastille is immense.

Every one must have noticed in his own case that the mind — and herein lies the marvel of its unity complicated with ubiquity — has a strange aptitude for reasoning almost coldly in the most violent extremities, and it often happens that wild passion and deep despair, in the very agony of their blackest soliloquies, handle subjects and discuss theses. Logic is mingled with convulsion; and the thread of syllogism runs, without breaking, through the mournful storm of thought. Such was Marius's state of mind.

As he thus mused, crushed, but resolute, hesitating and shuddering at what he was about to do, his eye wandered about the interior of the barricade. The insurgents were conversing in whispers, without moving; and that quiet silence which marks the last stage of expectation was perceptible. Above them, at a third-floor window, Marius distinguished a sort of spectator or witness, who seemed singularly attentive; it was the porter killed by Cabbage-head. From below, by the light of the torch thrust between the paving-stones, this head could be vaguely seen. Nothing could be stranger, in that sombre and flickering light, than that motionless, livid, and amazed face, with its bristling hair, its fixed and open eyes and gaping mouth, bending over the street in an attitude of curiosity. It seemed as if the dead man were contemplating those who were about to die. A long stream of blood, which had flowed from his head, descended in reddish threads from the window to the first-floor, where it stopped.

BOOK XIV.

THE GRANDEUR OF DESPAIR.

CHAPTER I.

THE FLAG. — ACT FIRST.

NOTHING had happened yet. Ten o'clock had sounded from St. Merry's church. Enjolras and Combeferre were sitting, musket in hand, near the sally-port of the great barricade. They did not speak. They were listening, trying to catch even the dullest and most remote sound of marching.

Suddenly, in the midst of this mournful calm, a clear, gay young voice, which seemed to come from the Rue St. Denis, burst forth, and began to sing distinctly, to the old popular tune of " Au clair de la lune, " these lines, ending with a cry like a cock-crow.

"My nose is in tears;
My dearest Bugeaud,
Lend me your grenadiers:
One word e'er I go.
With a hen in my hat,
And a mantle of blue,
Do you see what I 'm at?
Co-cocorico!"

They clasped hands.

"'T is Gavroche," said Enjolras.

"He is warning us," said Combeferre.

A hasty rush disturbed the deserted street. A being more active than a clown was seen climbing over the omnibus, and Gavroche leaped into the barricade, breathless, saying:—

"My gun! Here they are!"

An electric shudder ran along the whole barricade, and the sound of hands seeking guns was heard.

"Will you have my carbine?" Enjolras asked the street-arab.

"I want the big gun," answered Gavroche. And he took Javert's musket.

Two sentries had fallen back, and came in almost simultaneously with Gavroche. They were the sentinels from the end of the street and the Petite Truanderie. The scout in the Lane des Prêcheurs remained at his post, which indicated that nothing was coming from the direction of the bridges and the Markets.

The Rue de la Chanvrerie, of which a few paving-stones only were visible in the reflection of the light thrown on the flag, offered to the insurgents the aspect of a great black door vaguely opened in a cloud of smoke.

Every man proceeded to his post.

Forty-three insurgents, among whom were Enjolras, Combeferre, Courfeyrac, Bossuet, Joly, Bahorel, and

Gavroche, knelt behind the great barricade, their heads on a level with the top, the muzzles of their guns and carbines aimed on the paving-stones as through loop-holes, attentive, silent, ready to fire. Six, commanded by Feuilly, installed themselves at the upper windows of Corinth with their muskets in position.

Several minutes elapsed; then the measured, heavy tramp of many feet was distinctly heard from the direction of St. Leu. This sound, at first faint, then precise, then heavy and re-echoing, approached slowly, without halt or interruption, with a tranquil and terrible continuity. Nothing else was audible. It was at once the silence and the sound of the statue of the Commander;[1] but this stony footfall had something indescribably enormous and multiple about it which evoked the idea of a multitude, and at the same time that of a spectre. One might have fancied that he heard the fearful statue Legion on the march. The tramp came nearer, nearer still, and then ceased. The breathing of many men seemed to be audible at the foot of the street. Nothing, however, was visible; though quite at the end, as in the thick gloom, could be distinguished a multitude of metallic threads, fine as needles and almost imperceptible, which moved about like that indescribable phosphoric net-work which we see under our closed eyelids, in the first mists of slumber, just at the moment when we are falling asleep. These were bayonets and musket barrels, dimly lighted up by the distant reflection of the torch.

There was another pause, as if both sides were waiting. All at once, from the heart of that darkness, a voice, which was the more sinister because no one could be seen, and it seemed as if obscurity itself was speaking, shouted: —

"Who goes there?"

[1] In the opera of "Don Giovanni."

At the same time, the click of muskets, as they were lowered, was heard. Enjolras replied with a sonorous and haughty accent: —

" The French Revolution! "

" Fire! " said the voice.

A flash empurpled every house front in the street, as if the door of a furnace had been suddenly opened and shut.

A frightful shower of bullets rained upon the barricade. The red flag fell. The discharge had been so violent and dense that it cut the flag-staff, — that is to say, the extreme tip of the omnibus pole.

Bullets, rebounding from the cornices of the houses, penetrated the barricade and wounded several men.

The impression produced by this first discharge was chilling. The attack was severe, and of a nature to make the boldest reflect. It was plain that they had to deal with a whole regiment at the least.

" Comrades, " cried Courfeyrac, " let us not waste our powder. Wait till they have entered the street before returning their fire. "

" And, above all, " said Enjolras, " let us hoist the flag again! "

He picked up the flag, which had fallen just at his feet. Outside, the ring of ramrods in the barrels of guns was heard; the troops were reloading. Enjolras continued: —

" Who among us has a brave heart? Who will plant the flag on the barricade again? "

Not one replied. To mount the barricade at that moment, when all the guns were doubtless again aimed at it, was simply death. The bravest hesitates to utter his own sentence. Enjolras himself shuddered. He repeated: —

" Will no one volunteer? "

CHAPTER II.

THE FLAG. — ACT SECOND.

SINCE they had reached Corinth and begun to build the barricade, no one paid any further attention to Father Mabœuf. M. Mabœuf, however, had not quitted the insurgents. He had gone into the ground-floor room of the wine-shop and seated himself behind the bar. There he was, so to speak, lost in his own thoughts. He seemed no longer to see or think. Courfeyrac and others had twice or thrice accosted him, warning him of his peril, and begging him to withdraw; but he had not appeared to hear them. When no one was speaking to him, his lips moved as if he were answering some one; and so soon as people addressed him, his lips ceased moving, and his eyes no longer seemed alive.

A few hours before the barricade was attacked, he had assumed a posture which he had not quitted since, with both fists on his knees, and his head bent forward, as if he were looking over a precipice. Nothing could move him from this attitude. It did not appear as if his mind were in the barricade. When every one else went to their posts, the only persons left in the room were Javert, tied to the stake, an insurgent with drawn sabre watching over Javert, and Mabœuf. At the moment of the attack, at the detonation, the physical shock affected, and, as it were, awoke him. He suddenly rose, crossed the room, and at the moment when Enjolras repeated his appeal, "Will no one volunteer?" the old man appeared on the threshold of the wine-shop.

His presence produced a sort of commotion in the various groups.

A cry was raised:—

"It is the voter! the Conventionalist! the representative of the people!"

He probably did not hear it.

He walked straight up to Enjolras, the insurgents making way for him with religious awe; he tore the flag from Enjolras, who shrank back with petrifaction, and then, no one daring to arrest or help him, this old man of eighty, with shaking head but firm foot, began slowly to ascend the staircase of paving-stones formed inside the barricade. His action was so gloomy and so grand that all around him cried: "Off with your hats!" With every step he mounted, the scene became more frightful. His white hair, his decrepit face, his high, bald, and wrinkled brow, his hollow eyes, his amazed and open mouth, his old arm raising the red banner aloft, stood out from the darkness and were magnified in the sanguinary brightness of the torch; and the spectators fancied they beheld the spectre of '93 issuing from the ground, the flag of terror in its hand.

When he reached the last step, when this trembling and terrible phantom, standing on the pile of ruins, in the presence of twelve hundred invisible gun-barrels, drew himself up in the face of death, as if stronger than it, the whole barricade assumed in the darkness a supernatural and colossal aspect.

There followed one of those silences which occur only in the presence of prodigies.

In the midst of this silence the old man waved the red flag, and cried:—

"Long live the Revolution! Long live the Republic! Fraternity! Equality! and Death!"

Those in the barricade heard a low and rapid whisper,

like the murmur of a hurried priest galloping through a prayer. It was probably the police commissioner reading the Riot Act at the other end of the street.

Then the same shrill voice which had shouted: "Who goes there?" cried: —

"Surrender!"

M. Mabœuf, livid, haggard, his eye illumined by the mournful flames of mania, raised the flag above his head and repeated: —

"Long live the republic!"

"Fire!" said the voice.

A second discharge, like a shower of grape-shot, rained down upon the barricade.

The old man sank on his knees, then rose again, let the flag slip from his hand, and fell backward on the pavement, like a log, with out-stretched arms. Rivulets of blood flowed from beneath him. His pale, melancholy old face seemed to be gazing at heaven.

One of those emotions stronger than man, which make him forget even self-defence, seized upon the insurgents, and they approached the corpse with respectful terror.

"What men these regicides are!" said Enjolras.

Courfeyrac whispered in Enjolras's ear: —

"This is only between ourselves, as I do not wish to dampen the enthusiasm, but this man was anything rather than a regicide. I knew him. His name was Mabœuf. I do not know what was the matter with him to-day, but he was a brave fool. Just look at his head."

"The head of an idiot and the heart of a Brutus!" replied Enjolras. Then he raised his voice: —

"Citizens, such is the example which the old give to the young. We hesitated; he came! We shrank back; he advanced! This is what those who tremble with age teach those who tremble with fear! This aged man is

august in the eyes of his country. He has had a long life and a magnificent death! Now let us place his corpse under cover, let each of us defend this old man dead as he would defend his father living, and let his presence in our midst render the barricade impregnable!"

A murmur of gloomy and energetic assent followed these words.

Enjolras bent down, raised the old man's head, and sternly kissed him on the forehead. Then, stretching out his arms, and handling the dead man with tender precaution, as if afraid of hurting him, he took off his coat, pointed to the blood-stained holes, and said: —

"This is now our flag!"

CHAPTER III.

GAVROCHE HAD BETTER HAVE TAKEN THE CARBINE OF ENJOLRAS.

A LONG black shawl belonging to Widow Hucheloup was thrown over Father Mabœuf. Six men made a litter of their muskets; the corpse was laid on this, and they carried it, with bare heads and solemn slowness, to the large table in the ground-floor room.

These men, wholly absorbed in the grave and sacred thing they were doing, forgot the perilous situation in which they stood.

As the corpse was borne past the stoical Javert, Enjolras said to the spy:—

"Your turn next!"

During this time, little Gavroche, who alone had not left his post, but had remained on the watch, fancied he saw men creeping stealthily up to the barricade. All at once he cried: "Look out!"

Courfeyrac, Enjolras, Jean Prouvaire, Combeferre, Joly, Bahorel, and Bossuet, all hurried tumultuously out of the wine-shop. It was almost too late. They

saw a flashing line of bayonets waving on the crest of the barricade. Municipal Guards of tall stature made their way in, some striding over the omnibus, others through the sally-port, driving before them the street-arab, who fell back, but did not fly.

The moment was critical. It was that first dreadful minute of inundation, when the river rises even with the levee, and the water begins to filter through the fissures of the dyke. One second more, and the barricade would have been captured.

Bahorel dashed at the first Municipal Guard who entered, and killed him with a shot from his carbine. The second killed Bahorel with a bayonet-thrust. Another had already knocked down Courfeyrac, who shouted: "Help!" while the tallest of all, a sort of Colossus, marched upon Gavroche, with his bayonet fixed. The gutter-snipe raised in his little arms Javert's enormous musket, resolutely aimed at the giant, and pulled the trigger. But the gun did not go off. Javert had not loaded it. The Municipal Guard burst into a laugh, and advanced upon the lad.

Before the bayonet touched Gavroche, the musket fell from the soldier's hands; a bullet struck him in the middle of the forehead, and he fell on his back. A second bullet struck the other guardsman who had attacked Courfeyrac, full in the chest, and laid him low.

These shots were fired by Marius, who had just entered the barricade.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BARREL OF GUNPOWDER.

MARIUS, still concealed at the turn of the Rue Mondétour, had watched the first phase of the combat with shuddering irresolution. Still, he was unable to resist for any length of time that mysterious and sovereign vertigo which may be called an appeal from the abyss. Seeing the imminence of the peril, seeing M. Mabœuf's death, that mournful enigma, Bahorel killed, Courfeyrac shouting for help, that child menaced, and his friends demanding succour or revenge, all hesitation vanished, and he rushed into the thick of the fight, pistols in hand. With the first shot he saved Gavroche, and with the second delivered Courfeyrac.

At the shots, at the cries of the Guards, the assailants swarmed up the intrenchment, on the crest of which could now be seen Municipal Guards, troops of the line, and National Guards from the suburbs, musket in hand.

They already covered more than two-thirds of the barricade, but they did not leap down into the enclosure; they hesitated, as if fearing some snare. They looked

down into the gloomy space as they might have peered into a lion's den. The light of the torch illumined only bayonets, bear-skin shakos, and the upper part of their anxious and irritated faces.

Marius had no longer a weapon. He had thrown away his discharged pistols; but he had noticed the barrel of gunpowder near the door of the ground-floor room.

As he half turned to look in that direction, a soldier levelled his musket at him. At the moment when the soldier was taking steady aim, a hand was laid on the muzzle of his musket and stopped it up. The young workman in the velveteen trousers had rushed forward. The shot was fired, the bullet passed through the hand, and probably through the workman, for he fell, but it did not reach Marius. All this through the smoke, rather foreseen than seen. Marius, who was entering the wine-shop, hardly noticed it; yet he had confusedly seen the gun pointed at him, and the hand laid on the muzzle, and had heard the explosion. But at minutes like this, the things that we see vacillate and are precipitated; we do not dwell on anything. We are obscurely impelled toward deeper shadows still, and all is mist.

The insurgents, surprised but not terrified, had rallied. Enjolras cried: "Wait! Do not waste your shots!" In truth, in the first moment of confusion, they might wound each other. The majority had gone up to the first-floor and attic windows, whence they commanded the assailants.

The more determined, with Enjolras, Courfeyrac, Jean Prouvaire, and Combeferre, were haughtily standing with their backs against the houses at the rear, unprotected, and facing the lines of soldiers and Guards who crowded the barricade.

All this was done without haste, with that strange and menacing gravity which precedes a combat. On both sides, men were aiming at each other within point-blank range. They were so close that they could converse without raising their voices.

When they had reached the point where the spark was about to shoot forth, an officer wearing a gorget and heavy epaulets stretched out his sword and shouted:

"Throw down your arms!"

"Fire!" said Enjolras.

The two discharges took place at the same moment, and everything disappeared in smoke,— an acrid and stifling smoke, in which the dying and the wounded writhed, with faint and hollow groans.

When the smoke dispersed, the combatants on both sides were seen, thinned out, but still in the same places, silently reloading their guns.

All at once a voice of thunder shouted:—

"Begone, or I will blow up the barricade!"

All turned to the quarter whence the voice came.

Marius had entered the tap-room, fetched the barrel of gunpowder, and then, taking advantage of the smoke and the sort of obscure mist which filled the intrenched space, he glided along the barricade up to the cage of paving-stones in which the torch was fixed. To tear out the torch, place in its stead the barrel of powder, thrust the pile of paving-stones under the barrel, which was at once staved in with a sort of terrible obedience, — all this had only occupied so much time as was necessary to stoop and rise again; and now, all — National Guards, Municipal Guards, officers, and privates — huddled together at the farther end of the barricade, gazed at him in stupor, as he stood with one foot on the paving-stones, torch in hand, his haughty face illumined by a fatal resolution, bringing the flame of the torch toward that

dreadful heap, where the broken powder-barrel lay, and uttering the startling cry:—

"Begone, or I will blow up the barricade!"

Marius on the barricade, after the octogenarian, was the vision of young revolution after the apparition of the old.

"Blow up the barricade!" said a sergeant, "and yourself, too!"

Marius answered: "And myself, too!" And he lowered the torch toward the barrel of gunpowder.

But there was no one left on the barricade. The assailants, leaving their dead and their wounded, flowed back pell-mell and in disorder toward the end of the street, and disappeared again in the night. It was a headlong flight.

The barricade was saved.

CHAPTER V.

END OF THE VERSES OF JEAN PROUVAIRE.

ALL surrounded Marius. Courfeyrac fell on his neck.

"Here you are!"

"What luck!" said Combeferre.

"You came just in the nick of time!" said Bossuet.

"Were it not for you I should be dead!" remarked Courfeyrac.

"Were it not for you I should be a goner!" added Gavroche.

Marius asked:—

"Where is your leader?"

"You are our leader," replied Enjolras.

Marius, the whole day through, had had a furnace in his brain, but now it was a tornado. This tornado which was within him produced on him the effect of being outside him, and of bearing him away. It seemed to him as if he were already an immense distance from life. His two luminous months of joy and love ended abruptly at that frightful precipice. Cosette lost to him, this barricade, M. Mabœuf letting himself be killed for the republic, himself the chief of the insurgents,—all these things seemed to him a monstrous nightmare. He was obliged to make a mental effort to remind himself that all which surrounded him was real. Marius had not lived long enough yet to know that nothing is so imminent as the impossible, and that the unforeseen is always to be foreseen. He witnessed the

performance of his own drama, as if it were a play of which he understood nothing.

In his mental fog he did not recognize Javert, who, fastened to his post, had not made a movement of his head during the attack on the barricade, and who saw the revolt buzzing about him with the resignation of a martyr and the majesty of a judge. Marius did not even see him.

Meantime, the assailants no longer stirred. They could be heard marching and swarming at the foot of the street, but they did not venture into it, either because they were waiting for orders, or because they required reinforcements, before rushing again upon that impregnable redoubt. The insurgents had posted sentries, and some, who were medical students, had begun dressing wounds.

All the tables had been dragged out of the wine-shop, with the exception of the two reserved for lint and cartridges, and the one on which Father Mabœuf lay. They had been added to the barricade, and the mattresses off the beds of Widow Hucheloup and the servants had taken their place in the tap-room. On these mattresses the wounded were laid. As for the three poor creatures who inhabited Corinth, no one knew what had become of them. They were at length found hidden in the cellar.

A poignant emotion darkened the joy of the rescued barricade.

The roll was called. One of the insurgents was missing. Who was it? One of the dearest, one of the most valiant,— Jean Prouvaire. He was sought among the wounded. He was not there. He was sought among the dead. He was not there. He was evidently a prisoner. Combeferre said to Enjolras: —

"They have our friend. We have their agent. Do you insist on the death of this spy?"

" Yes," replied Enjolras, " but less than on the life of Jean Prouvaire."

This was said in the bar-room close to Javert's post.

" Well," continued Combeferre, " I will tie a handkerchief to my cane, and go as a flag of truce, to offer to exchange their man for ours."

" Listen!" said Enjolras, laying his hand on Combeferre's arm.

There was a significant clash of arms at the end of the street. A manly voice cried:—

" Long live France! Long live the future!"

They recognized Prouvaire's voice.

A flash passed, and a report rang out.

Then all was silent again.

" They have killed him!" exclaimed Combeferre.

Enjolras looked at Javert, and said:—

" Your friends have just shot you."

CHAPTER VI.

THE AGONY OF DEATH AFTER THE AGONY OF LIFE.

IT is a peculiarity of this sort of war, that the attack on a barricade is almost always made from the front, and that the assailants generally refrain from turning the position, either because they suspect ambuscades, or because they are afraid of getting caught in winding streets. The whole attention of the insurgents was, consequently, directed to the great barricade, which was evidently the point constantly threatened, and the one where the contest would infallibly be renewed. Marius, however, thought of the little barricade, and went to it. It was deserted, and guarded only by the lamp which flickered among the paving-stones. However, Mondétour Lane and the branches of the Rue de la Petite Truanderie and the Rue du Cygne were perfectly calm.

As Marius, after making his inspection, was going back, he heard his name faintly uttered in the darkness:

"Monsieur Marius!"

He started, for he recognized the voice which had summoned him two hours back through the garden gate in the Rue Plumet, only this voice now seemed to be a mere gasp.

He looked around him and saw nobody.

He fancied that he was mistaken, and that it was an illusion added by his mind to the extraordinary realities which were contending around him. He stepped forward

in order to leave the remote corner where the barricade stood.

"Monsieur Marius!" repeated the voice.

This time he could not doubt, for he had heard it distinctly. He looked around, but saw nothing.

"At your feet," said the voice.

He stooped down, and saw in the shadow a form crawling toward him. It was grovelling on the pavement. It was this thing that had addressed him.

The lamp enabled him to make out a blouse, torn velveteen trousers, bare feet, and something that looked like a pool of blood. Marius also caught a glimpse of a pale face raised to him, which said:—

"Do you not recognize me?"

"No."

"Eponine."

Marius hastily stooped. It was indeed that hapless girl. She was dressed in man's clothes.

"What brought you here? What are you doing here?"

"I am dying," she said.

There are words and incidents which rouse the most despondent. Marius cried, with a start:—

"You are wounded! Wait, I will carry you into the wine-shop. Your wound must be dressed! Is it serious? How shall I take hold of you so as not to hurt you? Where do you suffer? Help! Good God! but what did you come here for?"

And he tried to pass his arm under her, to lift her. As he did so, he touched her hand; she uttered a faint cry.

"Have I hurt you?" asked Marius.

"A little."

"But I only touched your hand."

She raised her hand to Marius's eyes, and he saw in the centre of that hand a black hole.

" What is the matter with your hand ? " said he.

" It is pierced. "

" Pierced ? "

" Yes. "

" What with ? "

" A bullet. "

" How ? "

" Did you see a musket aimed at you ? "

" Yes, and a hand laid on the muzzle. "

" It was mine. "

Marius shuddered.

" What madness ! Poor child ! But so much the better ; if that is all, it is nothing. Let me carry you to a bed. Your wound shall be dressed, and people do not die of a bullet through the hand. "

She murmured : —

" The bullet passed through my hand, but it came out at my back. It is useless to move me from this spot. I will tell you how you can do me more good than any surgeon. Sit down beside me on that stone. "

He obeyed. She laid her head on his knees, and without looking at him, said : —

" Oh, how good that is ! How comfortable ! There ! I do not suffer now. "

She was silent a moment, then she turned her head with an effort, and gazed at Marius.

" Do you know what, M. Marius ? It annoyed me that you entered that garden. It was very foolish, for it was I who showed you the house ; and then, too, I ought to have remembered that a young man like you — "

She broke off, and leaping over the gloomy transitions which doubtless lurked in her mind, she added, with a heart-rending smile : —

" You thought me ugly, did you not ? "

Then she continued : —

"You see, you are lost! No one can leave the barricade now. I brought you here, you know! You must die. I feel sure of it. And yet when I saw that soldier aiming at you, I laid my hand on the muzzle of his gun. How queer that is! But it was because I wanted to die before you. When I received that bullet, I dragged myself here, as no one picked me up. I waited for you. I said: 'Will he not come?' Oh, if you only knew! I bit my blouse, I suffered so terribly! Now I feel all right. Do you remember the day I came into your room, how I looked at myself in your glass, and the day I met you on the boulevard near the washer-women? How the birds sang! It is not so very long ago. You gave me five francs, and I said to you: 'I do not want your money.' I hope you picked up your coin. You are not rich. I did not think to tell you to pick it up. The sun was shining bright. It was not cold. Do you remember, M. Marius? Oh, I am so happy! Everybody is going to die."

She had a mad, grave, and heart-rending look. Her ragged blouse displayed her naked throat.

As she talked, she laid her wounded hand on her breast, in which was another hole, and whence, at intervals, a stream of blood spurted like a jet of wine from an open bung-hole.

Marius gazed at this unfortunate creature with profound compassion.

"Oh," she suddenly cried, "it is coming back! I choke!"

She raised her blouse and bit it, and her limbs stiffened on the pavement.

At this moment little Gavroche's crowing voice rang through the barricade.

The lad had climbed on a table to load his musket, and was gayly singing the song so popular just then:—

"When he sees Lafayette,
The gendarme repeats :
'Let us take to our heels! Let us take to our heels!'"

Eponine raised herself and listened. Then she muttered : —

"It is he."

And turning to Marius : —

"My brother is here. He must not see me. He would scold me."

"Your brother?" asked Marius, as he thought most bitterly and sadly of the duties toward the Thénardiers which his father had bequeathed to him. "Which is your brother?"

"That little fellow."

"The one who is singing?"

"Yes."

Marius made a movement."

"Oh, do not go away," she said. "It will not be long now."

She was sitting almost upright, but her voice was very low, broken by hiccoughs. Every now and then she was interrupted by the death-rattle. She put her face as close as she could to that of Marius, and added with a strange expression : —

"Come, I will not play you a trick. I have had a letter in my pocket for you since yesterday. I was told to put it in the post. I kept it. I did not wish it to reach you. But perhaps you might be angry with me for it, when we meet again ere long. We shall meet again, shall we not? Take your letter."

She seized Marius's hand convulsively with her wounded hand, but she no longer seemed to feel any pain. She placed Marius's hand in her blouse-pocket. He really felt a paper in it.

"Take it," she said.

Marius took the letter. She gave a nod of satisfaction and consent.

" Now, for my trouble, promise me — "

And she stopped.

" What ? " asked Marius.

" Promise me ! "

" I promise. "

" Promise to kiss me on the forehead when I am dead. I shall feel it. "

She let her head fall again on Marius's knees, and her eyes closed. He thought the poor soul had departed. Eponine remained motionless. All at once, at the moment when Marius believed her asleep forever, she slowly opened her eyes, in which the gloomy profundity of death was visible, and said, with an accent whose sweetness seemed already to come from another world : —

" And then, Monsieur Marius, I think that I was a little bit in love with you. "

She tried to smile once more, and expired.

CHAPTER VII.

GAVROCHE AS A PROFOUND CALCULATOR OF DISTANCES.

MARIUS kept his promise. He laid a kiss on that livid brow, where an icy perspiration stood in beads.

It was not infidelity to Cosette; it was a pensive, sweet farewell to an unhappy soul.

It was not without a quiver that he took the letter which Eponine gave him. He at once suspected an event in it. He was impatient to read it. The heart of man is so constituted. The unfortunate child had no sooner closed her eyes than Marius began to think of unfolding the paper.

He laid her gently on the ground and went away. Something told him that he could not read that letter in the presence of that corpse.

He went up to a candle in the tap-room. It was a little note folded and sealed with the elegant care peculiar to women. The address was in a woman's hand, and ran: —

"To Monsieur Marius Pontmercy, at Courfeyrac's, No. 16, Rue de la Verrerie."

He broke the seal and read: —

June 4.

My well-beloved, — Alas! my father insists on our going away at once. We shall be this evening at No. 7 Rue de l'Homme Armé. Within a week we shall be in England.

Cosette.

Such was the innocence of their loves that Marius did not even know Cosette's handwriting.

What had happened may be told in a few words. Eponine had been the cause of everything. After the night of June 3, she had cherished a two-fold thought, — to foil the plots of her father and the bandits against the house in the Rue Plumet, and to separate Marius and Cosette. She had exchanged rags with the first young vagabond she met, who thought it amusing to dress up as a woman, while Eponine disguised herself as a man. It was she who gave Jean Valjean the expressive warning: "*Change your quarters.*" He had gone straight home and said to Cosette: "We start this evening; we go to the Rue de l'Homme Armé with Toussaint. Next week we shall be in London." Cosette, staggered by this unexpected blow, had hastily written two lines to Marius. But how was she to put the letter in the post? She never went out alone, and Toussaint, surprised at such an errand, would certainly show the letter to M. Fauchelevent. In this dilemma, Cosette saw, through the gate, Eponine in man's clothes, as she now prowled incessantly round the garden. Cosette had summoned "this young workman," and given him five francs and the letter, saying: "Carry this letter at once to its address." Eponine put the letter in her pocket. The next day, June 5, she went to Courfeyrac's rooms, and asked for Marius; not to hand him the letter, but "to see," — a thing which every jealous, loving soul will understand. There she waited for Marius, or at any rate, for Courfeyrac, — still "to see." When Courfeyrac said to her: "We are going to the barricades," an idea flashed across her mind, — to throw herself into that death as she would have done into any other, and to thrust Marius into it. She followed Courfeyrac, assured herself of the spot where the barricade

was being built, and, feeling certain, since Marius had received no warning, and she had intercepted the letter, that he would go at nightfall to the usual meeting-place, she went to the Rue Plumet, waited for Marius there, and gave him that summons in the name of his friends, which, as she thought, must lead him to the barricade. She reckoned on Marius's despair when he did not find Cosette. She was not mistaken. Then she returned to the Rue de la Chanvrerie. We have just seen what she did there. She died with the tragic joy of jealous hearts, which drag the beloved being down to death with them and say: "No one else shall have him!"

Marius covered Cosette's letter with kisses. She loved him, then! For a moment he had an idea that he ought not to die now. Then he said to himself: "Her father is taking her to England, and my grandfather will not give his consent to the marriage. No change has taken place in our fates." Dreamers like Marius undergo these moments of supreme depression, and desperate resolves result from them. The fatigue of living is insupportable; death is sooner over with. Then he thought that two duties were left him to accomplish,— to inform Cosette of his death and send her a last farewell, and to save from the imminent catastrophe which was in preparation that poor boy, Eponine's brother and Thénardier's son.

He had a pocket-book about him, the same which had contained the paper on which he had written so many love-thoughts for Cosette. He tore out a leaf, and wrote in pencil these few lines:—

"Our marriage was impossible. I asked my grandfather's consent; he refused to give it. I have no fortune, nor have you. I ran to your house; I found you had gone. You remember the pledge that I made you; I kept it. I die. I

love you. When you read this, my soul will be near you, and will smile upon you."

Having nothing with which to seal this letter, he merely folded it, and wrote on it the address: —

"To Mademoiselle Cosette Fauchelevent, at M. Fauchelevent's, No. 7, Rue de l'Homme Armé."

The letter folded, he stood for a moment lost in thought, then drew out his pocket-book again, opened it, and wrote with the same pencil these lines on the first page: —

"My name is Marius Pontmercy. Carry my body to my grandfather, M. Gillenormand, No 6, Rue des Filles du Calvaire, in the Marais."

He returned the book to his coat-pocket; then he summoned Gavroche. The lad, on hearing Marius's voice, ran up with his joyous and devoted air.

"Will you do something for me?"

"Anything," said Gavroche. "Golly! my goose would have been cooked if it had n't been for you!"

"You see this letter?"

"Yes."

"Take it. Leave the barricade at once [Gavroche began to scratch his ear anxiously], and to-morrow morning deliver it at its address, to Mlle. Cosette, No. 7, Rue de l'Homme Armé."

The heroic lad replied: —

"Well, but during that time the barricade will be taken, and I shall not be there."

"The barricade will not be attacked again until daybreak, according to all appearances, and will not be taken before to-morrow noon."

The fresh respite which the assailants had granted to the barricade was indeed prolonged. It was one of those

intermissions, frequent in nocturnal battles, which are always followed by redoubled fury.

"Well," said Gavroche, "suppose I were to deliver your letter to-morrow morning?"

"It will be too late. The barricade will probably be blockaded, all the outlets will be guarded, and you will be unable to get out. Be off at once!"

Gavroche could not think of any reply, so he stood there undecided, sorrowfully scratching his ear.

All at once he seized the letter, with one of those bird-like movements of his.

"All right!" he said. And he ran off through Mondétour Lane.

Gavroche had an idea which decided him, but which he did not mention, lest Marius should make some objection. This was his idea:—

"It is scarcely midnight, the Rue de l'Homme Armé is no great distance off. I will deliver the letter at once, and be back in time."

BOOK XV.

RUE DE L'HOMME ARMÉ.

CHAPTER I.

THE TREACHEROUS BLOTTING-BOOK.

WHAT are the convulsions of a city compared with the convulsions of a soul? Man is a greater profundity even than the people. Jean Valjean at this very moment was a prey to a frightful upheaval. Every gulf was re-opened within him. He, too, was shuddering, like Paris, on the threshold of a terrible and obscure revolution. A few hours had sufficed to overshadow his destiny and his conscience. Of him, as of Paris, it might be said: "The two principles are face to face." The white angel and the black angel are about to wrestle with each other on the brink of the abyss. Which will hurl the other down? Which will triumph?

On the evening preceding this same 5th of June, Jean Valjean, accompanied by Cosette and Toussaint, installed himself in the Rue de l'Homme Armé, where a sudden change awaited him.

Cosette had not left the Rue Plumet without an attempt at resistance. For the first time since they had lived together, the will of Cosette and the will of Jean Valjean had shown themselves distinct, and had at least

contradicted each other, though they did not clash. There were objections on one side and inflexibility on the other. The abrupt advice: "Change your quarters," flung at Jean Valjean by a stranger, had alarmed him to the point of making him despotic. He fancied himself tracked and pursued. Cosette was compelled to yield.

The pair reached the Rue de l'Homme Armé without exchanging a syllable, each being absorbed in personal pre-occupations,—Jean Valjean so anxious that he did not notice Cosette's sadness, Cosette so sad that she did not notice Jean Valjean's anxiety.

Jean Valjean had brought Toussaint with him, which he had never done in his previous absences. He foresaw that he might possibly never return to the Rue Plumet, and he could neither leave Toussaint behind him nor tell her his secret. Moreover, he felt her to be devoted and trusty. Treachery between servant and master begins with curiosity. Now, Toussaint, as if predestined to be Jean Valjean's servant, was not curious. She was wont to stammer out in her Barneville peasant dialect: "I am made so. I do my work; the rest does not concern me."

In this departure from the Rue Plumet, which was almost a flight, Jean Valjean took with him nothing but the odorous little portmanteau, christened by Cosette the "inseparable." Full trunks would have required porters, and porters are witnesses. A hackney coach was called to the door in the Rue de Babylone, and they went away in it.

It was with great difficulty that Toussaint obtained permission to pack up a little stock of linen and clothes, and a few toilet articles. Cosette, herself, only took her desk and blotting-book.

Jean Valjean, in order to heighten the solitude and mystery of this disappearance, had so arranged as to leave the Rue Plumet at nightfall, which gave Cosette

time to write her note to Marius. They reached the Rue de l'Homme Armé when it was quite dark, and went to bed in perfect silence.

Their apartments in this street were situated on the second-floor in a rear courtyard, and consisted of two bedrooms, a dining-room, and a kitchen adjoining, with a loft, in which there was a truckle bed that fell to the lot of Toussaint. The dining-room was at the same time the anteroom, and separated the two bedrooms. The apartments were provided with the necessary articles of furniture.

Human nature is so constituted that men become reassured almost as absurdly as they are alarmed. Hence Jean Valjean had no sooner reached the Rue de l'Homme Armé than his anxiety was lightened and gradually dissipated. There are soothing places which act to some extent mechanically on the mind. When a street is obscure, the inhabitants are peaceful. Jean Valjean felt a contagious tranquillity in this lane of old Paris, which is so narrow that it is barred against vehicles by a cross-beam resting on two posts, and is dumb and deaf amid the noisy town, full of twilight at high noon, and, so to speak, incapable of emotions between its two rows of high, century-old houses, which are silent, like the old folk that they are. There is in this street a stagnant oblivion. Jean Valjean breathed again. How was it possible that he could be found there?

His first care was to place the "inseparable" by his side.

He slept soundly. Night brings counsel; we might add, night quiets and composes. The next morning he woke up almost gay. He considered the dining-room charming, though it was hideous, furnished with an old round table, a low sideboard surmounted by a slanting mirror, a rickety easy-chair, and a few chairs encum-

bered with Toussaint's parcels. Jean Valjean's National Guard uniform peeped through a hole in one of these parcels.

As for Cosette, she ordered Toussaint to bring a basin of broth to her bedroom, and did not make her appearance till evening.

About five o'clock, Toussaint, who went about very busy with settling this little household, placed a cold fowl on the dinner-table, which Cosette consented to look at, out of deference for her father.

This done, Cosette, protesting a persistent headache, said good-night to Jean Valjean, and shut herself up in her bedroom. Jean Valjean ate a wing of the fowl with a good appetite, and with his elbows on the table, gradually growing reassured, regained his feeling of security.

While he was eating this modest dinner, he twice or thrice vaguely heard the stammering Toussaint say: "There is a row going on, sir; they are fighting in Paris." But, absorbed in a multitude of mental combinations, he had paid no attention to her. Truth to tell, he had not heard her.

He rose and began to walk from the door to the window, and from the window to the door, growing ever more and more serene.

As he became calmer, Cosette, his sole pre-occupation, reverted to his mind. Not that he was alarmed by this headache,—a slight nervous attack, a girlish fit of the sulks, a momentary cloud which would disappear in a day or two,—but he thought of the future, and, as usual, thought of it with pleasure. After all, he saw no obstacle to his happy life resuming its course. At certain hours everything seems impossible, at others, everything appears easy. Jean Valjean was in one of those good hours. They usually follow the bad hours, as day follows night, by virtue of that law of succes-

sion and contrast which is the very basis of nature, and which superficial minds call antithesis. In this peaceful street where he had sought shelter, Jean Valjean shook himself free of all that had troubled him for some time past. The very fact that he had seen so much darkness made him begin to see a little blue sky. To have left the Rue Plumet without any complication or incident was a good step gained. Perhaps it would be wise to leave the country, were it only for a few months, and go to London. Well, they would go. What did he care whether he were in England or France, provided that he had Cosette by his side? Cosette was his nation. Cosette sufficed for his happiness. The idea that he, perhaps, did not suffice for Cosette's happiness — that idea which had formerly been the cause of his fever and sleeplessness — did not even present itself to his mind. He was in a state of collapse from all his past sorrows, and he was in the hey-day of optimism. Cosette, being by his side, seemed to be his, — an optical illusion which everybody has experienced. He arranged in his mind, and with all possible facility, his departure for England with Cosette; and he saw his felicity reconstructed, no matter where, in the perspectives of his revery.

As he walked slowly up and down, his eye suddenly fell on something strange.

He saw, in the inclined mirror facing him over the sideboard, and distinctly read, these lines: —

June 4.

My well-beloved, — Alas! my father insists on our going away at once. We shall be this evening at No. 7 Rue de l'Homme Armé. Within a week we shall be in England.

Cosette.

Jean Valjean stopped with haggard gaze.

Cosette, on arriving, had laid her blotting-book on the

sideboard facing the mirror, and, immersed in her painful thoughts, had forgotten it and left it there, without even noticing that she had left it open at the very page on which she had dried the few lines which she had written and intrusted to the young workman passing along the Rue Plumet. The writing had been copied off on the blotting-paper, and the mirror reflected the writing.

The result was what is called in geometry a symmetric image; so that the writing, reversed on the blotting-paper, was straight in the mirror, and presented its natural appearance, and Jean Valjean had before his eyes the letter written on the previous evening by Cosette to Marius.

It was simple and crushing.

Jean Valjean went to the mirror. He read the lines again, but he did not believe in them. They produced on him the effect of appearing in a flash of lightning. It was a hallucination; it was impossible; it could not be.

Gradually his perceptions became more precise. He looked at Cosette's blotting-book, and a sense of the reality returned to him. He took up the blotting-book, and said: "It comes from that." He feverishly examined the lines imprinted on the blotting-paper; but as they ran backward, he could see no meaning in the strange scrawl. Then he said to himself: "Why, it means nothing; there is nothing written here." And he drew a long breath with inexpressible relief. Who has not felt such wild delight in horrible moments? The soul does not surrender to despair till it has exhausted every illusion.

He held the blotter in his hand and gazed at it, stupidly happy, almost ready to laugh at the hallucination of which he had been the dupe. All at once his eyes

again fell on the mirror, and he again saw the vision. The few lines stood out with inexorable clearness. This time it was no mirage. It was palpable; it was the writing turned straight in the mirror. He understood. The recurrence of a vision is reality.

Jean Valjean tottered, let the blotting-book slip from his grasp, and sank into the old easy-chair beside the sideboard, with hanging head and glassy, wandering eyes. He said to himself that it was clear, that the light of the world was eclipsed forever, and that Cosette had written that to somebody. Then he heard his soul, which had again become terrible, utter a hoarse roar in the darkness. Just attempt to take from the lion the dog he has in his cage!

Strange and sad to say, at that moment Marius had not yet received Cosette's letter; accident had treacherously carried it to Jean Valjean before delivering it to Marius.

Up to that day, Jean Valjean had never been conquered by trial. He had been subjected to frightful proofs; not a blow of evil fortune had been spared him. The ferocity of fate, armed with all vindictiveness and social scorn, had taken him for its prey and had set upon him. He had accepted, when it was necessary, every extremity. He had sacrificed his inviolability as a reformed man, had given up his liberty, risked his head, lost everything, suffered everything, and he had remained disinterested and stoical to such an extent that at times he seemed to be oblivious of self, like a martyr. His conscience, hardened to all possible assaults of adversity, might seem quite impregnable. Any one who now gazed into his heart would be compelled to admit that it weakened at that hour.

In truth, of all the tortures he had undergone in the course of this long trial to which fate had subjected him,

this was the most fearful. Never had such a vice held him before. He felt the mysterious stirring of all his latent sensibilities. He felt the thrill of the unknown chord. Alas! the supreme trial, we may say, the sole trial, is the loss of the being whom we love.

Poor old Jean Valjean assuredly did not love Cosette otherwise than as a father; but, as we have already remarked, the very widowhood of his life had introduced all the forms of love into his paternity. He loved Cosette as his daughter, loved her as his mother, and loved her as his sister; and, as he had never had either a sweetheart or a wife, as Nature is a creditor who accepts no protest, that feeling, too, the most clinging of all, was mingled with the others, vague, ignorant, pure with the purity of blindness, unconscious, heavenly, angelic, and divine,— less like a feeling than an instinct, less like an instinct than an attraction, imperceptible, invisible, but real; and love, properly so called, was in his enormous tenderness for Cosette, like the vein of gold in the mountain, hidden and virgin.

Our readers must recall for a moment this state of the heart, to which we have already referred. No marriage was possible between them,— not even that of souls; and yet it is certain that their destinies were wedded. Except Cosette,— that is to say, except a child,— Jean Valjean, during his whole life, had never loved anything. Those passions and loves which succeed each other had not produced in him those successive stages of green, light green, or dark green, which may be seen on leaves that survive the winter, and in men who pass their fiftieth year. In fine, as we have more than once urged, all this inward fusion, all this whole, whose resultant was a lofty virtue, ended by making Jean Valjean a father to Cosette,— a strange father, forged out of the grandsire, the son, the brother, and the hus-

band which existed in Jean Valjean; a father in whom there was even a mother; a father who loved Cosette and adored her, and to whom this child was light, home, family, country, and paradise.

Hence, when he saw that this was clearly the end,— that she was escaping from him, slipping through his fingers, concealing herself from him, like a cloud, like water; when he had before his eyes this crushing proof: "Another is the object of her heart, another is the wish of her life! she has a lover, I am only her father, I no longer exist;" when he could no longer doubt; when he said to himself, "She is leaving me!" — the sorrow he experienced far exceeded the bounds of possibility. To have done all that he had done to attain this, and to be nothing,— then, as we have just stated, a quiver of revolt ran from head to foot. He felt, even to the roots of his hair, the immense re-awakening of selfishness, and the "Ego" yelled in the depths of the man's soul.

There are such things as mental landslides. The penetration of a desperate certainty into a man is not effected without removing and destroying certain profound elements which are at times the very man himself. Grief, when it attains that pitch, is a frantic flight of all the forces of the conscience. Such crises are fatal. Few among us emerge from them still ourselves and firm in our duty. When the limit of endurance is exceeded, the sternest virtue is disconcerted. Jean Valjean took up the blotting-book and convinced himself afresh. He bent, as if petrified, and with staring eyes, over the undeniable lines; and such a cloud arose within him that it seemed as if his whole soul were crumbling away.

He examined this revelation, through the exaggerations of revery, with an apparent and startling calm-

ness; for it is a fearful thing when a man's calmness attains the coldness of a statue.

He measured the frightful step which his destiny had taken without any suspicion on his part. He recalled his fears of the past summer, so foolishly dissipated; he recognized the precipice, — it was still the same; but Jean Valjean was no longer on the brink; he was at the bottom.

The extraordinary and crushing part of it was, that he had fallen without perceiving it. The whole light of his life had fled while he still fancied he saw the sun. His instinct was unhesitating. He put together certain circumstances, certain dates, certain blushes, and certain pallors of Cosette, and he said to himself: "It is he!"

The divination of despair is a sort of mysterious bow which never misses its mark. Its first shaft struck Marius. He did not know the name, but he instantly found the man. He distinctly perceived, in the depths of the implacable evocation of memory, the unknown prowler of the Luxembourg, that villanous seeker after love affairs, that romantic idler, that fool, that coward, — for it is cowardly to make eyes at girls who have beside them a father who loves them.

Feeling quite certain that this young man was at the bottom of the situation, and that all this trouble came from him, Jean Valjean, the regenerated man, the man who had toiled so heavily over his soul, the man who had made so many efforts to resolve all life, all misery, and all misfortune into love, looked into his own heart, and there beheld a spectre, — Hate.

Great griefs exhaust. They discourage us with life. The man into whom they enter feels something taken from him. In youth, their visit is sad; later on, it is ominous. Alas! when the blood is hot; when the hair

is black; when the head is erect on the body like the flame on the candle; when the web of destiny is yet unrolled; when the heart, full of yearning love, still has throbs which may be given back to it; when a man has time to recover from the wound; when all women, and all smiles, and all the future, and the whole horizon lie before him; when the vigour of life is complete,— if despair be a frightful thing under such circumstances, what is it in old age, when the years are hastening on, growing ever more and more pallid, toward that twilight hour when the stars of the tomb begin to shine forth?

While he mused, Toussaint entered. He rose and asked her:—

"Do you know whereabouts it is?"

Toussaint, in her amazement, could only answer:—

"I beg your pardon, sir."

Jean Valjean continued:—

"Did you not say just now that they were fighting?"

"Oh, yes, sir," replied Toussaint. "Over at St. Merry."

Some mechanical movements come to us, without our cognizance, from our deepest thoughts. It was doubtless under the impulse of a movement of this nature, of which he was scarcely conscious, that Jean Valjean five minutes later found himself in the street.

He was bareheaded; he sat on the stone post before his house. He seemed to be listening.

Night had set in.

CHAPTER II.

GAVROCHE, THE ENEMY OF LAMPS.

HOW long did he remain there? What was the ebb and flow of this tragic meditation? Did he draw himself up? Did he remain bowed down? Had he been bent till he was broken? Could he rise again and regain his footing upon something solid in his conscience? Probably he could not have said himself.

The street was deserted. A few anxious citizens, hurriedly returning home, scarcely noticed him. Every man for himself is the rule in times of peril. The lamplighter came as usual to light the lamp which stood exactly opposite the door of No. 7, and went away. Jean Valjean would not have appeared like a living man to any one who might have examined him in this gloom. He sat on his post motionless, like a statue of ice. There is congelation in despair. The alarm-bell and vague stormy noises were heard. In the midst of all these convulsions of the bell blended with the riot, the clock of St. Paul struck eleven, solemnly, and without haste; for the tocsin is man, the hour is God. The passing of the hour produced no effect on Jean Valjean; he did not stir. Almost immediately after, however, a sudden explosion broke out in the direction of the Markets, followed by a second even more violent; it was probably that attack on the barricade in the Rue de la Chanvrerie which we have just seen repulsed by Marius.

At this double discharge, whose fury seemed increased by the stupor of the night, Jean Valjean shuddered. He rose, turned in the direction whence the sound came, then fell back on the post, crossed his arms, and his head slowly sank again on his breast.

He resumed his dark dialogue with himself.

All at once, he raised his eyes. There was some one in the street. He heard footsteps close to him; he looked, and by the light of the lamp, he saw a pale, young, radiant face in the direction of the street which runs past the Archives. It was Gavroche, who had just reached the Rue de l'Homme Armé.

Gavroche was looking up in the air, and appeared to be seeking something. He saw Jean Valjean distinctly, but paid no attention to him.

Gavroche, after looking up in the air, looked down on the ground. He stood on tiptoe, and felt the doors and ground-floor windows; they were all shut, bolted, and barred. After examining the fronts of several houses barricaded in this way, the boy shrugged his shoulders, and then took himself to task as follows: "By golly!"

Then he looked up in the air again.

Jean Valjean, who a moment previous, in his present state of mind, would neither have spoken to nor answered any one, felt an irresistible impulse to address this lad.

"Little fellow," he said, "what is the matter with you?"

"The matter is that I 'm hungry," answered Gavroche, bluntly. And he added: "Little fellow yourself!"

Jean Valjean felt in his waistcoat-pocket, and pulled out a five-franc piece. But Gavroche, who was a sort of wagtail, and rapidly passed from one gesture to another, had just picked up a stone. He had caught sight of the lamp.

"Hullo!" said he; "you have still got lights here. That 's against the regulations, my friend. That is disorderly conduct. Smash that for me." And he threw the stone at the lamp.

The broken glass fell with such a clatter that the citizens hiding behind their curtains in the opposite house cried: "It is as bad as '93!"

The lamp flickered violently and went out. The street became suddenly dark.

"That 's it, old street," said Gavroche, "put on your night-cap." Then, turning to Jean Valjean, he said: "What do you call that gigantic monument which you have there at the end of the street? It 's the Archives, is n't it? Let 's pull down some of those great brutes of columns and make a tidy barricade out of them."

Jean Valjean moved closer to Gavroche.

"Poor creature," he said in a low voice, speaking to himself, "he is hungry." And he placed the five-franc piece in his hand.

Gavroche looked up at him, amazed at the size of this double sou. He gazed at it in the darkness, and the whiteness of the big sou dazzled him. He was acquainted with five-franc pieces by hearsay. Their reputation was agreeable to him. He was delighted to see one so closely. He said: "Let us contemplate the tiger."

He looked at it for some moments in ecstasy. Then, turning to Jean Valjean, he held out the coin to him, and said majestically:—

"Citizen, I prefer breaking lanterns. Take back your ferocious animal. I am not to be corrupted. It has five claws; but it sha'n't scratch me."

"Have you a mother?" asked Jean Valjean.

Gavroche replied:—

"More than you have, maybe."

"Well," returned Jean Valjean, "keep that money for your mother."

Gavroche was touched. Moreover, he had just noticed that the man who was addressing him had no hat, and this inspired him with confidence.

"Really!" said he. "Then it is not to keep me from breaking the lamps?"

"Break as many as you like."

"You are a fine fellow," said Gavroche. And he put the five-franc piece into one of his pockets. Then, with increasing confidence, he added: "Do you belong in this street?"

"Yes; why?"

"Can you point me out No 7?"

"What do you want at No. 7?"

Here the lad stopped, for he feared that he had said too much. He energetically plunged his nails into his hair, and confined himself to answering:—

"Ah, there it is!"

An idea flashed across Jean Valjean's mind. Agony has these insights. He said to the boy:—

"Have you brought me the letter which I am expecting?"

"You?" said Gavroche; "you ain't a woman."

"The letter is for Mlle. Cosette, is it not?"

"Cosette?" grumbled Gavroche; "yes, I think that is the ridiculous name."

"Well," continued Jean Valjean, "you are to deliver the letter to me. Give it here."

"In that case, you must be aware that I am sent from the barricade?"

"Of course," said Jean Valjean.

Gavroche thrust his hand into another of his pockets, and produced a square folded letter. Then he gave the military salute.

"Respect for the despatch," he said; "it comes from the provisional government."

"Give it to me," said Jean Valjean.

Gavroche held the paper high above his head.

"You must not imagine that it is a love-letter. It is for a woman, but it is for the people. We men fight, and we respect the fair sex. We are not like people in the world of fashion, where lions[1] send chickens[2] to camels."[3]

"Give it to me."

"After all," continued Gavroche, "you look like an honest man."

"Make haste."

"Catch hold!" And he handed the paper to Jean Valjean. "Make haste, Monsieur Chose,[4] since Mamselle Chosette is waiting."

Gavroche felt pleased at having made this pun. Jean Valjean added:—

"Is the answer to be taken to St. Merry?"

"That would make," exclaimed Gavroche, "one of those dishes vulgarly called a 'perfect mess' of it. The letter comes from the barricade in the Rue de la Chanvrerie, and I am going back there. Good-night, citizen."

This said, Gavroche went off; or, to speak more correctly, resumed his bird-like flight to the spot whence he had escaped. He plunged back into the darkness, as if he made a hole in it, with the rigid rapidity of a projectile. The Rue de l'Homme Armé became once again silent and solitary. In a twinkling that strange lad, who had something shadowy and dreamlike about him, buried himself in the gloom of those rows of black houses, and was lost like smoke in the dark; and one might have fancied that he was dispersed, had van-

[1] Dandies of 1840.
[2] Love-letters.
[3] Loose women.
[4] Mr. Thingumbob.

ished, had not, a few minutes after his disappearance, a tremendous clatter of broken glass, and the splendid crash of a lamp shattered on the pavement, suddenly re-awakened the indignant citizens. It was Gavroche passing along the Rue de Chaume.

CHAPTER III.

WHILE COSETTE AND TOUSSAINT ARE ASLEEP.

JEAN VALJEAN re-entered the house with Marius's letter.

He groped his way upstairs, pleased with the darkness, like an owl that grasps its prey, gently opened and closed his door, listened whether he could hear any sound, convinced himself that Cosette and Toussaint were, to all appearances, asleep, and plunged three or four matches into the Fumade lighting-bottle before he could procure a spark, his hand trembled so much. What he had just done savoured of robbery. At last his candle was lit. He set his elbows on the table, opened the letter, and read.

In violent emotions, men do not read; they hurl down, so to speak, the paper they hold, clutch it like a victim, crumple it, bury in it the nails of their fury or delight; they hasten to the end, they dash at the beginning; attention is at fever heat; it seizes on the essential facts; it fastens on a single point, and all the rest disappears. In the note from Marius to Cosette, Jean Valjean saw only these words: —

"I die. When you read this, my soul will be near you."

In the presence of this line he felt a horrible sense of bewilderment. He remained for a moment as if crushed by the change of emotion which took place in him. He gazed at Marius's letter with a sort of drunken amaze-

ment; he had before his eyes that splendour, — the death of a hated being.

He uttered a frightful cry of inward joy. So all was over. The catastrophe had come more quickly than he could have dared to hope. The being that encumbered his destiny was about to disappear. He went of his own accord, freely and willingly. Without his doing anything in the matter, through no fault of his, "that man" was about to die. Perhaps he was already dead. Here his fever made its calculations: "No, he is not yet dead." The letter was evidently written to be read by Cosette on the following morning. Since the two volleys heard between eleven o'clock and midnight, nothing had occurred. No serious attack on the barricade would be made till daybreak; but no matter, from the moment when 'that man' took a hand in this war, he was lost, he was caught in the cog-wheels. Jean Valjean felt himself set free. He would once more find himself alone with Cosette. All rivalry ceased; the future began again. He need only keep the note in his pocket. Cosette would never know what had become of 'that man.' I have only to let things take their course. That man cannot escape. If he is not dead yet, it is certain that he will die. What happiness!"

All this said mentally, he became gloomy.

Then he went down and aroused the porter.

About an hour later, Jean Valjean left the house in the uniform of a National Guard, and armed. The porter had easily obtained for him in the neighbourhood the articles necessary to complete his equipment. He had a loaded musket and a full cartridge-box. He proceeded in the direction of the Markets.

CHAPTER IV.

GAVROCHE'S EXCESS OF ZEAL.

MEANTIME, an adventure had happened to Gavroche. After conscientiously stoning the lamp in the Rue du Chaume, he entered the Rue des Vieilles-Haudriettes; and, not seeing "even a cat" there, he thought it an excellent opportunity to strike up a song at the full pitch of his lungs. His march, far from being retarded by his singing, became accelerated. He sowed broadcast along the sleeping or terrified houses the following incendiary couplets:—

"Birdlings gossip in the hedgerow:
They say that Atala last night
With a Russian maid took flight.
Where pretty maidens go,
Lon la.

"You idly chatter, dearest Pierrot,
For yester-eve my neighbour Jane
Called me with a tap on her window-pane.
Where pretty maidens go,
Lon la.

"Oh, naughty girls are nice to know;
How drunk Sir Orfila would be,
With their poison which bewitches me.
Where pretty maidens go,
Lon la.

"I love love; I love its fallings out, O!
I love Agnes and I love Maria;
Lucy was burned in setting me on fire.
Where pretty maidens go,
Lon la.

"Once when the mantles, waving to and fro,
Of Susan and of Leila, I 'd behold
My soul sought shelter in each silken fold.
Where pretty maidens go,
Lon la.

"Love, when, in the shadow where you glow,
You wreathe with roses Lola's head,
I 'd lose my soul for that, I said.
Where pretty maidens go,
Lon la.

"Blanche at the glass doth deck herself from top to toe!
Alas! I lost my heart one sunny day;
'T was Blanche that captured it, astray.
Where pretty maidens go,
Lon la.

"At night, the stars I Stella show,
From routs and dances on our homeward way;
'Behold my fair!' to them I say.
Where pretty maidens go,
Lon la."

Gavroche, as he sang, was lavish of his pantomime. Gesture is the mainstay of a chorus. His face, an inexhaustible repertory of masks, made grimaces more convulsive and more fantastic than the mouthings of a torn sheet in a stiff breeze. Unluckily, as he was alone and in the dark, this was neither seen nor visible. Much wealth is wasted in this way.

Suddenly he stopped short.

"We must interrupt the romance," said he.

His cat-like eye had just distinguished inside a gateway what is called in painting, a harmony,—that is to

say, a being and a thing. The thing was a hand-cart, the being an Auvergnat sleeping inside it.

The shafts of the cart rested upon the pavement, and the Auvergnat's head rested on the tail of the cart. His body was curled upon this inclined plane, and his feet touched the ground.

Gavroche, with his experience of the things of this world, recognized a drunken man. It was some street-corner porter who had drunk too much and was sleeping too much.

"Such is the use," thought Gavroche, "to which summer nights may be turned. The Auvergnat sleeps in his cart. I take the cart for the republic, and leave the Auvergnat for the monarchy."

His mind had just been illumined by this flash of light: —

"That cart would be famous for our barricade!"

The Auvergnat snored.

Gavroche gently pulled the cart from behind, and the Auvergnat from before, — that is to say, by the feet, — and in another minute the imperturbable porter was lying flat on the pavement.

The cart was empty.

Gavroche, constantly accustomed to facing unexpected events, had always everything about him. He felt in one of his pockets and pulled out a scrap of paper and a bit of red pencil, prigged from some carpenter.

He wrote: —

For the French Republic,
Received this cart.

GAVROCHE.

This done, he put the paper in the snoring porter's velvet waistcoat-pocket, seized the hand-cart with both hands, and started off in the direction of the Markets,

pushing the cart before him at a gallop, with glorious and triumphal uproar.

This was dangerous. There was a guard post at the royal printing-office. Gavroche did not think of this. This post was held by suburban National Guards. A certain sense of alarm began to arouse the squad, and heads were raised from camp-beds. Two lamps broken, one directly after the other, this loud singing, were a good deal for such cowardly streets, which like to go to bed at sunset, and which put the extinguisher on their candles at so early an hour. For an hour past, the gutter-snipe had been making as much noise in this peaceful district as a fly in a bottle. The sergeant listened and waited. He was a prudent man.

The wild rattle of the truck filled up the measure of possible patience, and determined the sergeant to attempt a reconnoitrement.

"There must be a whole band of them," he said, "so let us advance gently."

It was clear that the hydra of anarchy had emerged from its box, and was playing the deuce in the quarter.

The sergeant ventured out of the guard-house on tiptoe.

All at once, Gavroche, pushing his truck, found himself, just as he was turning out of the Rue des Vieilles-Haudriettes, face to face with a uniform, a shako, a top-knot, and a musket.

For the second time he stopped short.

"Hullo!" said he, "it 's he. Good-day, Public Order."

Gavroche's surprises were short and rapidly thawed.

"Where are you going, scamp?" cried the sergeant.

"Citizen," said Gavroche, "I have not yet called you 'tradesman.' Why do you insult me?"

"Where are you going, scoundrel?"

"Sir," continued Gavroche, "you may have been a man of sense yesterday, but you must have sent in your resignation this morning."

"I ask you where you are going, villain?"

Gavroche answered:—

"You speak prettily. Really, no one would fancy you that age. You ought to sell every hair of your head at one hundred francs apiece. That would bring you in five hundred francs."

"Where are you going? Where are you going? Where are you going, ruffian?"

Gavroche retorted:—

"Those are ugly words. The next time they give you the breast, they must wipe your mouth better."

The sergeant levelled his bayonet.

"Will you tell me where you are going, or not, wretch?"

"General," said Gavroche, "I am going to fetch the doctor for my wife, who is taken in labour."

"To arms!" shouted the sergeant.

It is the master-stroke of powerful minds to save themselves by the very means which ruined them. Gavroche measured the whole situation at a glance. It was the cart that had compromised him; the cart must now protect him.

Just as the sergeant was about to rush on Gavroche, the cart, converted into a projectile and launched at full speed, rolled upon him furiously; and the sergeant, struck full in the stomach, tumbled over backward into the gutter, while his gun went off in the air. On hearing their sergeant's cry, the Guard hurried forth pell-mell. The shot produced a general blind discharge, after which they reloaded their guns, and began again.

This blindman's-buff firing lasted a good quarter of an hour, and killed sundry panes of glass.

In the mean time, Gavroche, who had turned frantically back, stopped five or six streets off, and sat down, panting, on the post at the corner of the Rue des Enfants Rouges and listened.

After gasping for a few minutes, he turned in the direction where the musketry was raging, raised his left hand to the level of his nose, and thrust it out thrice, slapping the back of his head with his right hand, — a sovereign gesture, in which Parisian gutter-snipes have condensed French irony, and which is evidently effective, as it has already lasted more than half a century.

This gayety was troubled by one bitter reflection.

"Yes," he said, "I 'm splitting, I 'm bursting, I 'm running over with joy, I crack my sides, but I 've lost my way. I shall be obliged to steer a round-about course. I only hope I shall reach the barricade in time."

So saying, he ran off again. As he ran, he asked himself: "Oh, by the way, where was I?"

Then he began his song again, which gradually died out in the darkness of the streets. This was his song:

"But prisons still are left, O!
To clap you all in irons I intend
If public order does not soon amend.
Where pretty maidens go,
Lon la.

"To play at skittles who will with me go?
The whole old world in ruins sure will fall,
So soon as we shall roll the big round ball.
Where pretty maidens go,
Lon la.

"Good old folks, with your crutches strike a blow,
Shatter the Louvre, the place
Where monarchs ruled in gold and lace.
Where pretty maidens go,
Lon la.

"We 've burst the gates both high and low.
King Charles's head was not stuck tight that day;
It came unglued and tumbled off, I say.
Where pretty maidens go,
Lon la."

The turn-out of the Guard was not without result. The cart was captured, the drunken man was made prisoner. The first was put in the pound; the second was afterward brought before a court-martial as an accomplice. The public ministry of that day in this instance displayed its indefatigable zeal in the defence of society.

Gavroche's adventure, which has lingered as a tradition in the Temple quarter, is one of the most terrible reminiscences of the elderly tradesmen of the Marais, and is entitled in their memory: "The night attack on the guard-house of the royal printing-office."

END OF VOL. IV.

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